



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

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# Evaluation of the Habitat Conservation Partnerships Program

March 2018

## Acknowledgements

The Evaluation Project Team would like to thank the individuals who contributed to this project. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the contribution of members of the Evaluation Committee, as well as the interviewees who provided insights and comments crucial to this evaluation.

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the 2009 Treasury Board (TB) Policy on Evaluation<sup>1</sup> and the Financial Administration Act requirements to evaluate all ongoing programs of grants and contributions and direct program spending at least once every five years. It was identified in the 2014 Departmental Risk-Based Audit and Evaluation Plan.

This report was approved by the Deputy Heads of Environment and Climate Change Canada on March 16, 2018. It is available on the Environment and Climate Change Canada website in both official languages.

This report was prepared by the Evaluation Division of the Audit and Evaluation Branch

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<sup>1</sup> The [Policy on Results](#) replaced the Policy on Evaluation in 2016.

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

AEB	Audit and Evaluation Branch
COP	Conference of the Parties
COSEWIC	Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada
CWA	Canada Wildlife Act
CWS	Canadian Wildlife Service
DUC	Ducks Unlimited Canada
ECCC	Environment and Climate Change Canada
EGP	Ecological Gifts Program
FAA	Financial Administration Act
FSDS	Federal Sustainable Development Strategy
G&C	Grants and contributions
HAAP	Hunting and Angling Panel
HCP	Habitat Conservation Partnerships
HJV	Habitat Joint Venture
MBCA	Migratory Birds Convention Act
NACP	Natural Areas Conservation Program
NAWCA	North American Wetlands Conservation Act
NAWCC	North American Wetlands Conservation Council
NAWMP	North American Waterfowl Management Plan
NCC	Nature Conservancy of Canada
NGO	Non-governmental organization
O&M	Operations and maintenance
OQO	Other qualified organization
SARA	Species at Risk Act
TB	Treasury Board
WHC	Wildlife Habitat Canada

## Executive summary

ECCC's Audit and Evaluation Branch conducted an evaluation of the Habitat Conservation Partnerships (HCP) Program, covering activities from 2010-11 to 2015-16.

The HCP Program consists of several program components. Each one provides different mechanisms to engage with organizations and individuals, including with landowners, environmental non-governmental organizations and others. The HCP Program is focused on ensuring that wildlife habitat on private lands, provincial Crown lands, indigenous lands or in aquatic and marine areas across Canada are secured and managed in ways that are compatible with habitat conservation.

The program contributes to the delivery of ECCC's mandate under the [Species at Risk Act](#) (SARA), the [Migratory Birds Convention Act](#) (MBCA) and the [Canada Wildlife Act](#) (CWA).

This report presents the results of the evaluation of five of the seven HCP Program components:

- Natural Areas Conservation Program (NACP)
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP)/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada) (NAWCC Canada)
- Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC) Conservation Stamp Initiative
- Ecological Gifts Program (EGP)
- Canada's participation in the Ramsar Convention

Average annual program expenditures for these five program components for the six-year period from 2010-11 to 2015-16 were \$28.2 million, managed by approximately 17 full-time equivalent employees.

## Conclusions

### Relevance

The HCP Program addresses the continued need for wildlife habitat conservation in Canada. It is aligned with federal conservation and ecosystem preservation objectives.

ECCC's involvement in the HCP Program is consistent with federal roles and legislated responsibilities related to securing and protecting important and ecologically sensitive habitat. The HCP Program supports international commitments, including those associated with NAWMP, the Ramsar Convention and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

### Performance

The HCP Program has made appropriate progress towards most of its expected results. The NACP, NAWMP, EGP and Ramsar components directly contribute to long-term habitat protection through

land securement and retention. While the total cumulative number of hectares secured across all components of the HCP Program is not available, the individual components continue to acquire lands for protection and have made significant progress towards their respective land securement or retention goals.

All HCP Program components contribute to habitat management and stewardship. There is evidence that best practices, guidelines and processes for the management of secured properties are in place. The NAWMP—and since 2013, the NACP—are progressing towards their habitat management targets. The WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative contributes to habitat management through value-added funding to NAWMP and other partners. The EGP encourages the recipient organizations to establish and implement management plans for donated lands. Management plans have been developed for most Canadian Ramsar sites.

Levels of participation and engagement are mixed across the various HCP Program components. While several program components have good overall levels of stakeholder engagement and participation, the evaluation findings suggest there is still room for improvement. The evaluation identified a need for broader engagement and awareness of the EGP among potential donors, particularly those who may possess important and ecologically sensitive habitat. The NAWMP component is seen as a successful partnership model for co-operation among public and private stakeholders at various levels; however, agricultural, forestry and indigenous stakeholders have been under-represented. Though the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative engages with its targeted audience of hunters, there is an opportunity to expand participation through increased outreach.

The HCP Program includes many internationally accepted best practices in wildlife habitat conservation. It supports a mix of mechanisms that contribute to wildlife habitat protection and conservation through partnerships in the conservation community.

The governance structures of the individual HCP Program components are clearly defined, appropriate and mostly efficient. However, a gap was identified in terms of any overarching governance that would provide for consolidated strategic planning across the various HCP Program components. This would support a more coordinated and integrated approach to priority setting and also enable greater collaboration, communication and efficiencies within the program.

The various components make effective use of leveraging mechanisms, building on ECCC funding to achieve habitat conservation results in an efficient manner. The use of external partners to deliver program components is also viewed as an efficient approach. For the most part, the administrative and operational practices of the various program components appear to be working well, with no significant inefficiencies identified.

All HCP Program components collect and report performance data. However, it is difficult to collect data and report on results at the overall HCP Program level. Overlap in reporting by the components results in some double counting. Although three of the five components have logic models, at the time of the evaluation, there was no overall logic model describing the program's expected results. Both these issues are being addressed by performance measurement planning related to implementing the 2016 Treasury Board (TB) [Policy on Results](#) and the introduction of

revised reporting procedures. As such, a recommendation related to performance measurement has not been included.

## **Recommendations**

Two recommendations are addressed to the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Canadian Wildlife Service:

1. Take appropriate actions to increase participation of targeted stakeholders in program areas where they are under-represented.
2. Introduce a consolidated approach to strategic planning to align priority setting across the various HCP Program components.

The Assistant Deputy Minister of the Canadian Wildlife Service agrees with the recommendations and has developed a management action plan that appropriately addresses each recommendation.



## 1. Context

Habitat loss is recognized as one of the main threats to migratory birds and species at risk. Wetlands, in particular, are one of the most biologically productive habitats, supporting a wide range of flora and fauna. In Canada, wetlands provide a critical source of habitat for over 155 bird species, 45 waterfowl species and 50 mammalian species, many of which are considered species at risk. Wetlands also provide countless economic and social benefits to humanity, ranging from freshwater supply, food and building materials, to flood control, groundwater recharge and climate change mitigation.

The protection and conservation of habitats require the efforts of not only Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) but also all of its many partners throughout the federal government and provinces, territories, Indigenous peoples, environmental non-governmental organizations, Canadians and others.

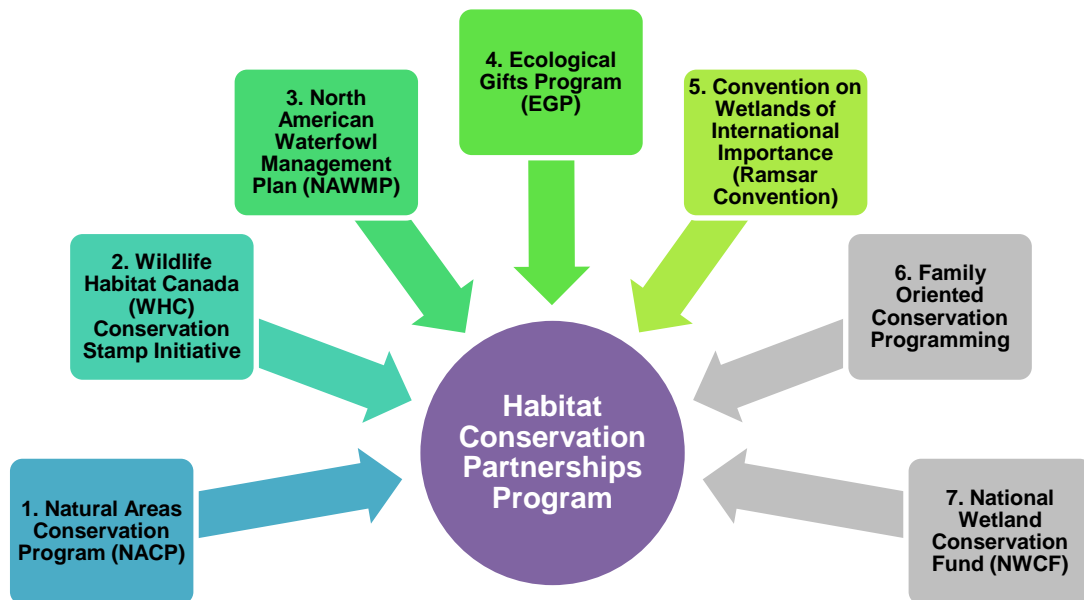
This report presents the results of the evaluation of ECCC's Habitat Conservation Partnerships (HCP) Program.

### **The Habitat Conservation Partnerships Program**

The HCP Program funds projects, provides tax incentives, and encourages partnerships and habitat conservation activities that secure, protect, improve and restore important and ecologically sensitive habitat for wildlife, including migratory birds and species at risk. The program consists of several program components that provide different mechanisms to engage with organizations and individuals, including landowners, environmental non-governmental organizations and others. The HCP Program is focused on ensuring that wildlife habitat on private lands, provincial Crown lands, indigenous lands or in aquatic and marine areas across Canada are secured and managed in ways that are compatible with habitat conservation.

The program contributes to the delivery of ECCC's mandate under the [Species at Risk Act](#) (SARA), the [Migratory Birds Convention Act](#) (MBCA) and the [Canada Wildlife Act](#) (CWA). The program also supports Canada's international commitments under the [North American Waterfowl Management Plan](#) (NAWMP) and the [Convention on Wetlands of International Importance](#) (Ramsar Convention), and contributes to targets related to protected areas and the conservation and enhancement of wetlands that Canada committed to under the United Nations [Convention on Biological Diversity](#).

The HCP Program consists of seven program components, as shown in [Figure 1](#).

**Figure 1: the Habitat Conservation Partnerships Program**

The evaluation looked at the five following program components:

- Natural Areas Conservation Program (NACP)**, through which ECCC provides funding (\$345 million over the period from 2007 to 2019) to a single grant recipient, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). This funding supports projects that aim to acquire ecologically sensitive lands through donation, purchase or stewardship agreement with private landowners. The NCC uses the program's funds to support projects it undertakes and to allocate some funding to projects managed by other non-profit, non-government conservation organizations (referred to as Other Qualified Organizations [OQO]), such as Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and provincial and regional land trusts and nature conservancies.
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP)/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (NAWCC) (Canada)**, a Canada-United States-Mexico partnership of federal, provincial and state governments and non-governmental organizations. It provides funding for projects to conserve wetland and upland habitats and associated waterfowl populations in North America. For the most part, external partners deliver NAWMP through Habitat Joint Ventures (HJVs), which are responsible for the overall planning, design and management of programs for key habitat areas. Funds are made available to Canada, the U.S. and Mexico through the NAWCA (Canada), which allocates funds with matching grant requirements to wetland conservation projects in the three countries.

- **Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC) Conservation Stamp Initiative**, through which ECCC transfers revenues generated from the sale of the Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamps to Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC), a national non-profit charitable conservation organization. The WHC uses these funds to support wildlife habitat conservation projects in Canada, especially for waterfowl. Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamps are developed and sold on an annual basis. The stamps are purchased primarily by waterfowl hunters to validate their Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permits.
- **Ecological Gifts Program (EGP)**, a tax incentive program that offers significant tax benefits to private landowners who donate ecologically sensitive land to qualified recipient organizations. The recipients become responsible for the conservation of the donated land's biodiversity and environmental heritage.
- **Canada's participation in the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention)**, an intergovernmental treaty where countries agree to maintain the ecological character of their wetlands of international importance.

Two components were added to the program in 2014, when the government of Canada announced the National Conservation Plan. They were excluded from the scope of the evaluation because it was still too early to be able to assess their performance.

- **Expanding Family Oriented Conservation Programming**, a \$3-million investment over three years (2014 to 2017) in the Earth Rangers, to expand family-oriented conservation programming.
- **National Wetland Conservation Fund (NWCFF)**, a five-year (2014 to 2019) \$50-million funding program that supports projects aimed at restoring degraded or lost wetlands and enhancing ecological functions of existing degraded wetlands.

A detailed description can be included in [Appendix A](#).

While each of the HCP Program components can be considered a program in its own right, they are also highly interrelated. A habitat conservation action may involve more than one program component. For example:

- funding from the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative can contribute to NAWMP projects
- NACP funding may be used to support the donation of land through the EGP
- stewardship projects funded by the NACP, NAWMP or the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative may occur on designated Ramsar sites or on lands that were acquired under another program component, including the NACP and the EGP

The program also has close links with several other ECCC programs, including the Species at Risk Program, the Migratory Birds Program, the Protected Areas Program and the Compliance Promotion and Enforcement – Wildlife Program.

Average annual program expenditures for the six-year period from 2010-11 to 2015-16 for the five program components studied were \$28.2 million, managed by approximately 17 full-time

equivalent employees. Funding for grants and contributions (G&Cs) comprise the vast majority of the expenditures, representing 93% of total program spending. The NACP is the largest of the five components, accounting for approximately 78% of total spending. [Table 16](#) shows ECCC's total HCP Program expenditures for the five program components.

Overall accountability for the HCP Program rests with the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada.

## About the evaluation

The evaluation looked at the first five program components over the period from 2010-11 to 2015-16. The evaluation team used a mixed-method approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative evidence, to assess issues related to the relevance and performance of the program:

- a review of various types of documents pertaining to the programs, the department and the Government of Canada
- interviews with 37 key informants, including ECCC program staff, senior management and external stakeholders
- an online survey sent to 871 stakeholders involved in one or more of the HCP Program components, with a response rate of 19.2% (167 respondents)
- six case studies (two projects from each of three program components: NAWMP/NAWCC [Canada], WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative and EGP)

A detailed description of the evaluation questions and methodology is included in [Appendix C](#).

[Table 1](#) outlines the limitations encountered while conducting the evaluation and the strategies put in place to mitigate their impact.

**Table 1: evaluation limitations and mitigation strategies**

Limitations	Mitigation strategies
The ability to develop meaningful conclusions from the overall program perspective proved challenging. The individual program components are very different and are delivered in a relatively autonomous manner. As well, few stakeholders were able to comment from an informed position on the overall program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The analysis focused mostly on the findings for each component.</li> <li>• Where possible, the information was aggregated to provide an overall evaluation of the program's relevance and performance.</li> </ul>
The bulk of the data collection for the evaluation was completed by March 31, 2015. However, resource constraints within ECCC's Audit and Evaluation Branch resulted in delays in the analysis and report-writing phase. These	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluation team reviewed supplementary documents such as financials for 2015-16 and more recent program documentation and performance data.</li> <li>• The new information was incorporated into the</li> </ul>

Limitations	Mitigation strategies
delays introduced concerns that the data collected may be dated.	report findings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program representatives were consulted to validate the accuracy of the findings.</li> </ul>

Key findings are presented in the next three sections. A rating is provided for each core issue assessed, based on a judgment of the evaluation findings. The rating statements and their significance are outlined in [Table 2](#). A summary of ratings for the evaluation questions is provided in [Appendix D](#).

**Table 2: definitions of standard rating statements**

Statement	Definition
Expectations met	The intended outcomes or goals have been achieved.
Further work required	Considerable progress has been made to meet the intended outcomes or goals, but attention is still needed.
Priority attention required	Insufficient progress has been made to meet the intended outcomes or goals and attention is needed on a priority basis.
Unable to assess	Insufficient evidence is available to support a rating.

## 2. Findings: relevance

This section summarizes the evaluation findings related to the relevance of ECCC's involvement in the Habitat Conservation Partnerships (HCP) Program. It does this by exploring the demonstrable need for the program, its alignment with government priorities and its consistency with the roles and responsibilities of the federal government.

**Table 3: ratings for relevance**

Relevance criteria	Expectations met	Further work required	Priority attention required	Unable to assess
2.1 Continued need for the program	•			
2.2 Alignment with federal government priorities	•			
2.3 Consistency with federal roles and responsibilities	•			

## 2.1. Continued need for the program

**Findings:** The need to conserve and protect wildlife habitat in Canada is greater than ever, given numerous stressors such as industrial development and climate change. Habitat loss is one of the biggest threats to species. Wetlands require particular attention since they are one of the most biologically productive habitats. They also provide economic and social benefits. The HCP Program addresses the need for habitat conservation through its various components. There was little evidence of duplication among the program components or between HCP Program components and other government programs. However, the evaluation team identified the potential for some overlap with activities under the Habitat Stewardship Program.

Habitat loss, including degradation and fragmentation, is identified as the most important factor driving biodiversity loss. Wetlands, in particular, require attention as they are one of the most biologically productive habitats, supporting a wide range of flora and fauna. Wetlands also provide countless economic and social benefits to humanity, ranging from freshwater supply, food and building materials, to flood control, groundwater recharge and climate change mitigation.

There is a continued need for interventions in the conservation, restoration and enhancement of wildlife habitat to address the potentially negative impacts of factors such as urban sprawl, increasing farm sizes, forestry practices, water drainage and intensive agricultural practices.

There is little evidence of duplication of effort among the various HCP Program components or with other government programs. The majority of interviewees reported that the program components are complementary. All of the HCP Program components contribute to habitat conservation goals, but accomplish this through the use of different mechanisms (discussed further in [4.3 Program delivery](#)).

There is, however, a potential for overlap with the Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP), a component of ECCC's Species at Risk Program. A few external interviewees expressed some confusion related to the similarity of activities funded under the EGP and NACP components of the HCP Program and the HSP with regard to species at risk. They also expressed an interest in greater integration of funding programs. Program representatives acknowledged the similarities, but noted that the HCP Program components and the HSP target different habitats and different actions. A review of program documentation confirms that the programs are similar. However, the HSP supports a broader range of activities or project types and favours stewardship activities as the primary means of achieving program goals. The EGP and NACP components focus more on land securement and protection.

## 2.2. Alignment with government priorities

**Findings:** The HCP Program is aligned with federal government and departmental priorities related to wildlife habitat conservation.

The HCP Program is aligned with federal priorities. In particular, the HCP Program is aligned with the federal objectives for wetland conservation outlined in the [1991 Federal Policy on Wetland Conservation](#). The objectives of the HCP Program are also aligned with current federal priorities as directed in the [Mandate letter of the Minister of Environment and Climate Change](#).

The HCP Program is also aligned with the goals and targets set out in the 2016 [Federal Sustainable Development Strategy](#) (FSDS) for sustainably managed lands and forests.

The program aligns with ECCC's Strategic Outcome 1: Canada's natural environment is conserved and restored for present and future generations.

### 2.3. Consistency with federal roles and responsibilities

**Findings:** ECCC's involvement in the HCP Program is consistent with the federal and departmental roles and responsibilities related to securing and protecting ecologically sensitive habitat outlined in several Acts. The HCP Program also supports a number of international commitments, including those associated with NAWMP, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ramsar Convention.

ECCC's involvement in the HCP Program helps the Minister of Environment and Climate Change carry out the responsibilities assigned in a number of Acts, including:

- the [Species at Risk Act](#) and the [Migratory Birds Convention Act](#), as well as the delivery of the [Canada Wildlife Act](#), by securing and protecting ecologically sensitive habitat to enhance the survival of wildlife, in particular species at risk and migratory birds
- the [Department of the Environment Act](#) by preserving and enhancing the quality of the natural environment, renewable resources, including migratory birds, and water

The HCP Program also supports the federal government in addressing a number of international commitments including:

- North American Waterfowl Management Plan
- Canada's international commitments under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, including the 2020 Biodiversity Targets and Goals for Canada
  - Target 1: By 2020, at least 17% of terrestrial areas and inland water, and 10% of coastal and marine areas, are conserved through networks of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measure
  - Target 3: By 2020, Canada's wetlands are conserved or enhanced to sustain their ecosystem services through retention, restoration and management activities
- the Administrative Authority and National Focal Point for Ramsar, supporting Canada's commitment to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance

Additionally, with respect to the Ecological Gifts Program (EGP), the terms of the [Income Tax Act](#) include special provisions for ecological gifts. Landowners who donate land or a partial interest in land to a qualified recipient receive a tax treatment that is superior to most other charitable gifts.

### 3. Findings: expected results

This section summarizes the evaluation findings related to the achievement of the HCP Program's expected results. It focuses on the extent to which the program has achieved results related to land securement, habitat management and stewardship and participation and engagement.

A detailed description of each of the program's expected results is included in [Appendix B](#).

**Table 4: ratings for expected results**

Expected results	Expectations met	Further work required	Priority attention required	Unable to assess
3.1 Land securement: The extent to which land has been secured (acquired or has come under protection)	•			
3.2 Habitat management and stewardship: The extent to which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- wildlife habitats are conserved through stewardship actions and managed sustainably through the creation, improvement, maintenance and management of wetland habitat</li> <li>- the program components, industry and organizations build and implement standards, guidelines and best practices to maintain and improve habitat</li> </ul>	•			
3.3 Participation and engagement: The extent to which target audiences participate and engage in conservation-related activities and are aware of conservation issues		•		



### 3.1 Land securement

**Findings:** While the total cumulative number of hectares secured across all components of the HCP Program is not available, the individual program components continue to acquire lands for protection and have made reasonable progress towards their respective land securement or retention<sup>2</sup> goals.

#### Overall

Of the five HCP Program components, four contribute directly to this outcome theme. WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative funds cannot be used to acquire land and therefore do not contribute directly to expected results related to land securement. The focus of the NACP is generally on securing ecologically sensitive private lands, with an emphasis on lands in southern Canada. NAWMP focuses specifically on wetlands and associated uplands, on both private and public lands. The EGP, like the NACP, has a broad focus on securing ecologically sensitive private lands, but is reliant on donors coming forward. Through the Ramsar Convention, Canada designates a variety of sites across the country for effective conservation and management. The HCP Program contributes to Target 1 of the 2020 Biodiversity Targets and Goals for Canada related to protected areas. However, its components were not initially established as a mechanism to address this target and, with a primary focus on private lands, make only a limited contribution towards its achievement.

Each of these four components continues to expand the total hectares secured under the HCP Program. [Table 5](#) presents the amount of new land secured or retained by each component from 2010-11 to 2015-16, as well as cumulatively from the component launch date. The table also presents each component's target for total cumulative hectares secured. It should be noted that it is not possible to provide an overall total for land securement or retention for the HCP Program because double counting may occur between components.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this report, the terms "securement", "protection" and "retention" are used interchangeably. The terms "securement" and "retention" refer to the protection of wetland or upland habitat through land title transfer or binding long-term (at least 10-year) legal agreements with a landowner. NAWMP Canada uses the term "retention" in its reporting.

**Table 5: total land secured or retained, by program component (in hectares)**

Program Component	Component launch date	Cumulative hectares secured from launch date to March 2011	Total hectares secured from April 2011 to March 2016	Total cumulative hectares secured as of March 2016	Targets as of March 2016 - Total cumulative hectares to be secured
Natural Areas Conservation Program	2007	142,236	276,291	418,526	N/A*
North American Waterfowl Management Plan	1986	7,784,309	325,455	8,109,765	8,155,274
Ecological Gifts Program	1995	136,949	43,956	180,905	164,876
Ramsar Convention	1981	13,066,615	20,096	13,086,711	N/A

Source: Data received from Program as of 2017. Note: Hectares reported by program component are not mutually exclusive and therefore cannot be summed.

\*NACP target is to secure 523,223 hectares by the end of 2018-19. See [Table 6](#) for more information on the NACP target.

It is also important to note that variations in both focus and funding structure across the components influence both the cost of securing land and the total funding available, including funds leveraged from other partners. These variations among components have a significant impact on the number of hectares secured.

### Natural Areas Conservation Program

The Nature Conservancy of Canada's (NCC) science-based conservation planning process has been critical to ensuring that securement and stewardship efforts are focused on priority lands of high ecological significance. The process engages experts, identifies gaps and gathers up-to-date information using biophysical models and tools to assess conservation needs and establish priority sites.<sup>3</sup> This information is collected and reported as "conservation blueprints" that identify target areas for land securement. Priority is generally given to lands that are nationally or provincially significant, that protect habitat for species at risk and migratory birds or that enhance connectivity or corridors between existing protected areas.

As shown in [Table 6](#), between April 2007 and March 2016, more than 418,000 hectares of land were secured under the NACP. Of this amount, over 276,000 hectares (66%) were secured during the 6-year evaluation timeframe. Each of the NACP funding agreements identified a specific amount of land the program was expected to secure with the funding provided.

<sup>3</sup> "Priority sites" are areas comprising one or multiple land parcels identified by the NCC as being important for conservation activity under the NACP. In addition, NAWMP priority areas determined by Joint Venture assessments and implementation plans are also identified as priority sites under the NACP.

**Table 6: Natural Areas Conservation Program land secured and targets (in hectares)**

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
<b>Land secured</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Agreement			Amended 1 <sup>st</sup> Agreement	2 <sup>nd</sup> Agreement	
Annual land secured (per Fiscal Year)	22,288	173,636	30,991	18,836	4,649	20,654
Cumulative land secured (per Agreement)	164,524*	338,160	369,151	24,073***	4,649	25,303
Target per agreement** – total land secured	200,000			18,000	130,000****	

Source: Data received from Program as of March 2017.

\* Includes land secured since program launch in 2007.

\*\* Targets are identified with the fiscal year the agreement was first in effect, within the evaluation period.

\*\*\* Includes 5,237 hectares secured in 2014-15 under the 2013 amended agreement. Amount has been added to the cumulative total for the 2013-2014 year.

\*\*\*\* Target represents additional hectares identified in 2014-19 Agreement to be secured between 2014-15 and 2018-19. This equates to a total cumulative target of 523,223 hectares by March 31, 2019.

The NACP target for the 2007 funding agreement, covering the period from 2007 to the middle of 2013-14, was to conserve approximately 200,000 hectares of ecologically significant lands across Canada with \$225 million. In 2013, the funding agreement was amended. The NACP committed to secure an additional 18,000 hectares with \$20 million in funding, establishing a new target total of 218,000 hectares. During the 2007 and the 2013 amended agreements, the NACP component secured over 393,000 hectares of land, far surpassing its targets. In 2011-12, the program experienced a significant but unanticipated increase in land secured. It successfully secured development rights in the Flathead Watershed Area, which accounted for over 157,000 hectares.

Under the current 2014-19 agreement, the NACP aims to secure an additional 130,000 hectares of ecologically significant lands. This represents an average of about 26,000 hectares per year over five years. At this point, it is still too early to know if this more ambitious target will be met. Significant fluctuations by year can be anticipated, given the variation in size and value of the land secured. However, the rate of securement for the two years for which data is available is less than this.

NACP lands secured between 2007 and 2014-15 were located in 83 NCC priority sites and 74 DUC NAWMP priority areas. The NCC's conserved areas also provide habitat for an increasing number of the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assessed species at risk. As of March 31, 2017, NCC properties provide habitat for 198 COSEWIC-assessed species at risk, compared to 181 species at risk as of March 2015 and 167 species at risk as of March 2014.

## North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)

NAWMP partners have successfully worked to conserve and restore wetlands, associated uplands and other key habitats for waterfowl across North America. As shown in [Table 7](#), from 1986 to March 2016, Canadian NAWMP partners belonging to one of the four Canadian Habitat Joint Ventures (HJVs) achieved their long-term goal of retaining 8.1 million hectares of land through land title transfers or binding long-term agreements with 10-year minimums. Of this total, 325,000 hectares (4%) were secured during the 6-year evaluation study period.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 7: North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada) land retained and targets (in hectares)**

Land retained	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Annual land retained	74,103	50,654	53,972	49,863	54,545	42,319
Cumulative land retained since 2007	7,858,412	7,909,038	7,963,038	8,012,901	8,067,446	8,109,765
Target - cumulative land retained	8,100,000					8,155,274

Source: Data received from Program as of June 2017

Based on draft HJV Implementation Plans, ECCC's 2015-16 Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP) identified a program target of securing 9.9 million hectares of land for waterfowl by March 2017. This was an ambitious target in light of trends. In the 2016-17 RPP, this target was revised to 8.2 million hectares secured by March 2017. Although the 2016-17 numbers are not yet available, it appears that the program component is making good progress towards meeting this revised goal.

It should be noted that, while NAWMP contributes to land securement, its original and 2012 revised objectives primarily focus on enhancing and managing wetlands.

## Ecological Gifts Program

[Table 8](#) presents the performance data related to land secured by donations under the EGP. In total, from 1995 to March 2016, 1,270 gifts were donated across Canada, protecting more than 180,000 hectares of ecologically sensitive land. Many of these sites are designated as being of national or provincial significance.

<sup>4</sup> This calculation excludes 2013, since there was no reporting done for that year.

**Table 8: Ecological Gifts Program land secured and targets (in hectares)**

Land retained	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Annual land retained	4,753	3,813	3,886	16,929	5,829	8,746
Cumulative land retained since 2007	141,702	145,515	149,401	166,330	172,159	180,905
Target - cumulative land retained					159,225	164,876

Source: Land secured data received from Program. Target data received from Departmental Performance Report (2014-15) and RPP (2015-16). Targets between 2010-11 and 2013-14 are not available.

Internal interviewees noted that, given the nature of the EGP, the program does not identify and target land. Rather, it must rely on private owners to come forward with donations. Consequently, it is difficult to predict target levels. However, in recent years, EGP has set tentative targets based on prior accomplishments.

Between 2010-11 and 2015-16, almost 44,000 hectares were secured through donations under the EGP. A very large donation in 2013-14 accounts for over a third of this total, bringing the cumulative land secured to 166,000 hectares in that year. This exceeded the March 2016 cumulative target of 164,000 hectares identified in ECCC's 2015-16 RPP.

### Ramsar Convention

There is no identified target for land securement under the Ramsar Convention. To date, Canada has protected 13 million hectares across its 37 designated Ramsar sites. 17 of these sites have national wildlife areas or migratory bird sanctuaries within their boundaries. Canada's biggest Ramsar site, the Queen Maud Gulf site, was designated in 1982. It comprises 6 million hectares and is the second-largest Ramsar site in the world. In 2012, Canada expanded the size of the Fraser River Delta, formerly known as the Alaksen Ramsar Site, from 586 hectares to over 20,000 hectares.

## 3.2 Habitat management and stewardship

**Findings:** Each of the HCP Program components contributes to increased levels of habitat management and land stewardship. As well, each has established guidelines and standard practices aimed at maintaining and improving wildlife habitat. Though the management of Ramsar sites falls under various jurisdictions and tends to vary considerably, management plans have been developed for most of Canada's Ramsar sites.

### Overall

All five programs contribute to habitat management and land stewardship. Guidelines and standard practices for habitat management and implementation standards, as well as reporting requirements, have also been established for the five program components.

The initial focus of the NACP was on land securement. However in recent years, the NACP has put an increasing focus on habitat management. Since 2013, the NACP allows for stewardship and habitat management activities on lands secured under the program.

As a long-standing program, NAWMP continues to add to the total amount of land managed or enhanced. The WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative also contributes to habitat management through value-added funding to NAWMP and partner initiatives. The EGP contributes to habitat management by encouraging the recipient organizations to establish and implement management plans. Management plans have been developed for the majority of Canadian Ramsar sites.

### Natural Areas Conservation Program

Funding under the NACP to support stewardship and habitat management was introduced with the 2013 NACP agreement. At that time, \$2.725 million of the \$10 million in funding was identified for the maintenance, improvement or monitoring of lands. The 2007-12 NACP agreement focused only on land securement. However, the 2014-19 agreement identified about \$15 million of the \$100 million in funding for use by the NCC for stewardship, and \$5 million for DUC to use for land securement and stewardship activities.

The NACP final report for the period from 2007-15 identifies that the NCC has raised over \$44 million in endowment capital, while other qualified organizations (OQO) raised an additional \$3 million. DUC also has a fund that provides resources to steward its secured lands, including land secured under the NACP. The NACP report also noted that the NCC and OQOs had spent about \$2.5 million on priority conservation actions and management activities to address urgent or necessary needs.

**Table 9: Natural Areas Conservation Program land managed and targets (in hectares)**

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Land managed	1 <sup>st</sup> Agreement			Amended 1 <sup>st</sup> Agreement	2 <sup>nd</sup> Agreement	
Total land managed	0	0	0	169,067	0	173,705
Target – total land managed	0	0	0	55,000	220,000*	

Source: Data received from Program as of June 2017.

\*Represents target identified in 2014-19 Agreement, to be achieved by the end of 2018-19.

The latest figures show that, as of 2015-16, the NACP managed approximately 174,000 hectares of land by using stewardship in Priority Conservation Actions and Monitored Conservation Agreements. The program will need to continue to add to this number to meet its target of managing 220,000 hectares by the end of 2018-19. There is no indication that this target is not attainable.

The NCC makes long-term stewardship of secured lands a priority by requiring that 15% of the total land value is allocated to a Stewardship Endowment Fund to undertake future land

management activities. It also ensures that ongoing active management plans are developed to guide longer-term stewardship of acquired lands. Interviewees confirmed that, overall, management plans have been a successful aspect of the NACP.

Stewardship activities for lands acquired in fee simple title<sup>5</sup> are guided by broader conservation plans and property-specific management plans, known as Property Management Plans. These plans use the ecological, biological and cultural information gathered in a [Baseline Inventory](#) to identify the conservation goals of the property, the threats to achieving the goals and actions necessary to meet the goals.

The NCC's science-based conservation planning approach (Conservation Blueprints) extends to land management through the Land Information System. This system ensures that secured properties are managed to achieve biodiversity targets and long-term conservation. Land conservation work at each Priority Natural Area is also guided by a comprehensive five-year Natural Area Conservation Plan. This plan builds on the foundation laid by the blueprints, identifies key biodiversity targets and associated threats and articulates concrete conservation actions aimed at ensuring lasting conservation results.

### **North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)**

Documentary evidence indicates that, overall, NAWMP has been successful in conserving waterfowl. This also speaks to the program's effective efforts related to habitat management. Work undertaken under NAWMP has been fundamental in advancing knowledge on habitat drivers of waterfowl populations. Documentary evidence and key informants indicated that NAWMP uses knowledge of the wildlife, habitats and ecosystems as a foundation in its conservation work. In addition to addressing North American continent-wide goals, NAWMP takes into consideration local and regional needs. HJV partners actively:

- research, monitor and evaluate waterfowl populations
- deliver habitat conservation programs at a regional level
- establish science-based implementation plans that address local, regional and international goals

Case study interviewees also indicated that NAWMP project partners provide farmers with information to improve their land.

[Table 10](#) provides performance data related to NAWMP's efforts for land management and enhancement.

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<sup>5</sup> The term "fee simple lands" refers to the lands secured by NCC through outright purchase or donation, where the title to the land has been transferred to NCC.



**Table 10: land managed and enhanced by North American Waterfowl Management Plan (Canada) (in hectares)<sup>6</sup>**

Land managed	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Incremental land managed	219,863	266,502	276,589	231,322	236,683	263,140
Total land managed	3,446,677	3,713,179	3,989,768	4,221,090	4,457,773	4,720,913
Incremental land enhanced	28,333	22,961	50,778	8,795	9,795	315,007
Total land enhanced	1,062,191	1,085,152	1,135,930	1,144,725	1,154,520	1,469,527
Target – total land enhanced						1,660,867*

Source: Data received from HCP Program, as of June 2017

\*Represents targets to be achieved by the end of 2017

From the program's launch in 1986 to 2016, the total cumulative land managed through the HJVs across Canada to maintain habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife has reached over 4.7 million hectares. In addition, almost 1.5 million hectares were enhanced or restored during the same time. The program appears to be on track to meeting the target of 1.6 million hectares established for the end of 2017. The number of hectares managed and enhanced under NAWMP continues to grow each year. The number of hectares managed increased by over 1.4 million hectares during the 6-year study timeframe, and the number enhanced increased by over 435,000 hectares.

### Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative

Case study evidence indicates that awareness and management projects supported by the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative are achieving their goals. Interviewees noted that the WHC's support for these activities is highly valued. There is no established target for land management for this program component.

The WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative contributes to habitat management by promoting awareness about waterfowl habitat and by providing an additional source of funding for habitat management initiatives led by partners, including those associated with NAWMP's Canadian HJVs. The program also supports projects like the Long Point Waterfowl Initiative and the Newfoundland and Labrador Wetlands Stewardship, to address the conservation and protection of important habitats that are not part of NAWMP's HJVs. Such projects may involve research and activities to assess land for securement, as well as habitat management.

The proportion of the program's funding projects that addresses NAWMP activities has been gradually increasing: 70% of funded projects addressed NAWMP activities in 2011-12 and 90% did so in 2015-16. While the program has increased the proportion of NAWMP activities it supports by 20% during the evaluation period, it did not fully meet the requirement of the 2011 contribution agreement that a minimum of 95% of funds allocated for grants be used towards initiatives under NAWMP. However, it should be noted that the new 2017-2020 ECCC-WHC contribution agreement no longer contains this requirement.

<sup>6</sup> Managed land can only be shown as a cumulative total because all existing land is managed each year and included in the calculation.



As shown in [Table 11](#), as of 2015-16, funding from the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative and other partners contributed to the conservation, management and enhancement of a total 806,000 hectares of land. Given the high number of NAWMP projects supported by the WHC, there is likely to be considerable overlap with the hectares reported under NAWMP in the NAWMP National Tracking System.

**Table 11: land managed by the Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative (in hectares)**

Land managed	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Total land managed	113,556	313,641	722,046	760,986	796,423	806,325

Source: Wildlife Habitat Canada Annual Reports 2010-11 to 2015-16

### Ecological Gifts Program

The EGP contributes to habitat management by requiring the recipient organizations to establish and implement management plans for donated land. This requirement is built into the EGP donation process and has been noted by donors as a valuable practice.

To be considered an eligible recipient of a land donation under the EGP, the recipient organization must acquire and manage “real estate for conservation purposes.”<sup>7</sup> The recipient organization must ensure that the biodiversity and environmental heritage features of the donated property or eligible interest or right in the property are maintained and managed according to the terms of the transfer of land, conservation easement, covenant or real servitude in perpetuity.

### Ramsar Convention

Canada’s Ramsar sites are owned by a range of agencies under different responsible jurisdictions, including federal, provincial, municipal and private lands. General management guidelines developed for Ramsar designated sites stipulate that the responsible jurisdiction or site manager must undertake wetland inventories and management planning for wetlands.

To date, 26 sites (70%) of the 37 Canadian Ramsar sites have completed management plans,<sup>8</sup> 8 sites (21%) have plans in progress and three sites (9%) have no management plan.

There is considerable variation in Ramsar site management plans, which reflect the differences in policies and legislation across jurisdictions and the diverse needs for the various Ramsar sites. There also appears to be considerable variation in the implementation of site management plans. External interviewees and survey respondents reported that some sites are managed better than others. While the management of Ramsar sites is officially the responsibility of the site managers

<sup>7</sup> [Canadian Ecological Gifts Program Handbook: A Legacy for Tomorrow a Tax Break Today](#), p. 11.

<sup>8</sup> This refers to Ramsar sites that have or will have a management plan for all or a portion of the site, depending on the designation. Source: [National Report on the Implementation of Ramsar Convention on Wetlands](#).

and not ECCC, the desire for greater leadership in implementing conservation actions with respect to Ramsar sites was identified.<sup>9</sup>

### 3.3 Participation and engagement

**Findings:** Levels of participation and engagement are mixed across the various HCP Program components. The NACP and NAWMP have high levels of engagement and participation from their target audiences. NAWMP in particular is seen as a successful partnership model for co-operation among public and private stakeholders at various levels. However, opportunities for improvement related to the involvement of some stakeholder groups were identified. While the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative and EGP components engage with their targeted audiences, the evaluation team identified that there is an opportunity to improve awareness and expand participation through increased outreach.

#### Overall

The HCP Program components are designed to enhance co-operation between stakeholders at the local, regional, national and international levels, as appropriate, and promote broad participation. The NACP component provides a mechanism for working with landowners through an external partner organization such as the NCC and other non-government conservation organizations, while the EGP encourages landowners to donate ecologically sensitive lands for conservation. The NAWMP component fosters co-operation on wetlands and waterfowl conservation between the key players in the U.S. and Canada at various governmental and non-governmental levels. Through the Ramsar Convention, Canada participates in international dialogue pertaining to wetlands. The requirement to secure matching funds for projects funded under the NACP, NAWMP and the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative serves to encourage participation and engagement from conservation stakeholders.

#### Natural Areas Conservation Program

Documentary evidence suggests that funding support provided by the NACP has allowed the NCC to strengthen its partnerships and collaboration with OQOs such as DUC and provincial and regional land trusts and nature conservancies. The NACP also engages Canadians through events, promotional activities and announcements, such as property-specific press conferences and media announcements, and promotions through various print and on-line media.

Some external interviewees indicated that program delivery by NGOs such as the NCC is efficient and effective at increasing engagement of landowners, since some landowners are more comfortable working with NGOs than directly with government.

However, not all landowners prefer to work with NGOs. A few external interviewees noted that the NCC may have a more challenging relationship with some organizations that are dissatisfied with

<sup>9</sup> This issue was also raised by external partners participating in a focus group conducted in February 2017, as part of an ongoing evaluation of the Migratory Birds Program.

the high levels of funding the NCC receives. As well, smaller organizations that cannot meet the matching requirements may be excluded from receiving funding. Interviewees noted that this may be limiting overall conservation efforts.

### **North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)**

Many interviewees, both internal and external, mention NAWMP as a successful partnership model that supports co-operation among public and private stakeholders at various levels. NAWMP's success in this area is viewed as being largely due to the concerted efforts of partners and the sustained engagement of the broad waterfowl conservation community enabled by the significant funding support for this initiative, including substantial levels of funding from the U.S.

Case study interviewees commended NAWMP for working closely with landowners and farmers to establish stewardship practices for land conservation and provide habitat for migrating waterfowl. They also reported that the support and partnership provided by ECCC means that a broader range of targeted audiences and organizations can be reached.

Interviewees noted that different stakeholders, local farmers and the public have shown a great level of interest and involvement in the discussion on wetlands policy. This has had a significant influence on the development of provincial wetland policies and increased awareness within governments about wetlands conservation.

Despite these identified strengths, both internal and external interviewees identified opportunities for improvement related to engaging with industry, other government departments, provincial government partners and Indigenous groups. In particular, both internal and external interviewees identified an absence of federal and provincial agricultural partners. Agriculture and forestry industry stakeholders and Indigenous stakeholders were also identified as being inadequately represented. Since much of the current conservation landscape is driven by these partners, their absence was noted as having an impact on overall conservation efforts, moving forward.

### **Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative**

Documentary evidence indicates that the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative component has been able to influence partner involvement in projects and has made a contribution to increasing the awareness of the need for stewardship activities through funding conservation projects. Case study interviewees reported that the transfer of knowledge and expertise and broad outreach into the community was adequate.

Survey respondents and key informants generally reported that this program component has adequate engagement from its target audiences; however, many indicated that audiences are only engaged to a limited extent. As the program relies on the revenues generated through the sales of stamps and hunting permits, maintaining an appropriate base of waterfowl hunters is key to success. Some external interviewees indicated that the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative would

benefit from greater outreach to the public and potential hunter groups in particular, to improve awareness of how the stamp funds are used in an effort to increase stamp sales.

### **Ecological Gifts Program**

The EGP is administered in co-operation with numerous partners, including other federal departments, provincial and municipal governments and environmental non-government organizations. The program also undertakes communication and program promotion activities to improve awareness of the EGP among its partners, stakeholders and the public at large. However, both the case studies and interviews indicated that many potential land donors are unaware of the EGP or of the fact that they may possess important habitat. Case study interviewees also identified a need for more EGP promotional activities to make landowners aware of the program. Interviewees noted that proactive identification of important habitats and distribution of information about the EGP to potential donors could increase their understanding of land preservation and their engagement.

Financial information indicates that there is minimal funding budgeted for promotional activities, totalling only \$55,096 over the six-year evaluation period. This amount accounted for 2% of total EGP Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding and 1% of EGP's overall funding.

### **Ramsar Convention**

While ECCC promotes stakeholder participation in decision making on wetland planning and management, its outreach and engagement with the wetlands community across Canada and communication among Ramsar site managers continue to be a challenge. Internal interviewees also identified a general lack of awareness among the Canadian public of the scope of Ramsar. Many external interviewees were of the view that the Ramsar program component receives minimal attention at the federal level, beyond the designation of sites. It was suggested that more engagement with site managers and coordination or oversight over Ramsar sites at the federal level could improve the implementation of management plans, create a more consistent assessment of the effectiveness of such actions and ultimately better support the goal of land conservation and management for Ramsar sites.

## **4. Findings: program efficiency**

This section summarizes the assessment of the Habitat Conservation Partnerships (HCP) Program's efficiency. The findings are based on an analysis of the program's use of resources to produce its outputs and move towards achieving expected results. It builds on qualitative information from a review of documents and interviews with management.

**Table 12: ratings for program efficiency**

Efficiency criteria	Expectations met	Further work required	Priority attention required	Unable to assess
4.1 The extent to which the program's cluster design is appropriate	•			
4.2 The extent to which the governance structure is clear, appropriate and efficient		•		
4.3 The extent to which program delivery is efficient and economical	•			
4.4 The extent to which performance data is collected		•		

#### 4.1 Cluster design of the program components

**Findings:** The various program components of the HCP Program support a mix of mechanisms that contribute to wildlife habitat protection and conservation through partnerships within the conservation community. The design of the HCP Program components includes many internationally accepted best practices in wildlife habitat conservation.

A comparative review of the program components found that, while the HCP Program components have similar overall objectives, each component meets those objectives using different and unique means and by fulfilling different roles. For example, both the EGP and NACP components focus on the conservation of ecologically sensitive private lands. However, the NACP provides funding to support land acquisition led by the NCC and OQOs, while EGP provides a tax incentive to landowners who donate lands.

The other three HCP Program components, namely NAWMP, WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative and Ramsar, focus primarily on wetlands. Under Ramsar, Canada designates sites containing wetlands of international significance. NAWMP is a continental conservation initiative that includes retention and management of wetlands and other waterfowl habitat. The WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative complements other conservation programs that wholly or in part support wetland conservation by contributing additional funding, primarily to NAWMP projects.

The majority (95%) of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is appropriate for ECCC to support programs that provide a mix of mechanisms contributing to wildlife habitat protection and conservation through partnerships.

The evaluation evidence identified that the various HCP Program components incorporate many of the characteristics considered to be best practices for the management of habitat conservation, including:

- development of a long-term vision and its linkage to short-term action

- strong emphasis on scientific data and ecological principles
- inclusion of an adaptive management approach and enhanced monitoring mechanisms
- broad participation by societal stakeholders and co-operation between the stakeholders at the local, regional, national and international levels
- integration of economic, social and environmental considerations

## 4.2 Governance structure

**Findings:** Each of the program components has its own governance structure that, for the most part, appears to be working well. However, the HCP Program does not have a governance process or structures in place that enables consolidated strategic planning and priority setting at the overall program level.

### Overall

Linkages exist between the various HCP Program components. For the most part, however, each component is managed and governed as a distinct program, with its own governance structure (summarized in [Table 13](#)), priority setting and management processes (see [Appendix A](#)). The evaluation team found no evidence of any overarching governance that pulls together the various component parts, provides consolidated strategic planning or establishes overall priorities.

**Table 13: summary of governance structure of the program components**

Program component	Governance
<b>Natural Areas Conservation Program</b>	The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is governed by a national board with support from seven regional boards. Together, these boards oversee all aspects of the NCC, including its management and activities. The NCC has established specific governance structures to deliver the NACP, including an Investment Committee that oversaw management of the Natural Areas Conservation Fund during the first NACP program; a Program Committee responsible for annual work plan and progress report reviews and approvals; and an OQO Committee focused on program activities conducted with OQOs.
<b>North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)</b>	In Canada, administration of NAWMP and guidance for its implementation are the responsibility of the North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada) (NAWCC Canada) and the Habitat and Species Joint Ventures. Canada is also represented on the tri-national Plan Committee. The NAWCC (Canada) Secretariat is housed in the Habitat Conservation Unit of ECCC's Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), which helps NAWCC (Canada) with its day-to-day operations. The NAWCC (Canada) membership consists of 19 partners. <sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> For a full list of members, consult the [NAWCC Canada Strategic Plan](#).

Program component	Governance
<b>Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative</b>	WHC is governed by a board of directors composed of two ECCC-appointed members, two representatives of the Provincial and Territorial Wildlife Directors and five members selected by the Board (Directors at Large) including representatives from provincial and territorial wildlife agencies and representatives from non-governmental national wildlife organizations. ECCC sits as an observer on the board. The board has three committees: the Executive Committee, the Finance and Audit Committee and the Nominating Committee.
<b>Ecological Gifts Program</b>	The EGP is administered by ECCC in co-operation with dozens of partners, including other federal departments, provincial and municipal governments, and environmental non-government organizations. A national secretariat and regional program coordinators manage the EGP. It works with the independent Appraisal Review Panel (ARP), which reviews appraisals submitted by donors, and makes recommendations to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Canada regarding the fair market value of ecological gifts.
<b>Ramsar Convention</b>	The Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP) meets every three years and promotes policies and guidelines to further the application of the Convention. ECCC's CWS represents the North American Region on the Ramsar Standing Committee, on a rotational basis with the U.S. and Mexico.

### Natural Areas Conservation Program

The 2012 evaluation of the NACP component found that the NCC has a clearly defined and understood governance structure for setting priorities and funding approvals. Similarly, most interviewees for the current evaluation reported that the governance structure of the NACP is appropriate and very effective. External interviewees noted that the program committee, which involves both the NCC and ECCC, has been effective. They mentioned that ECCC has been approachable in clarifying any issues about the eligibility of expenses or land acquisitions.

### North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)

Interviewees reported that the NAWMP governance structure is fairly clear and effective. There is some confusion, however, about the roles and responsibilities of NAWMP and the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) and the degree to which NAWMP can be used to support conservation goals other than waterfowl.

One survey respondent suggested that a national body that delivers national wetland conservation initiatives beyond the scope of individual HJVs would add value. As well, an updated national wetland policy would assist the efforts of all programs targeting wetland management and conservation.



## Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative

The WHC is governed and managed by a board of directors and three committees. The board is seen by key informants as inclusive; it comprises ECCC appointees, provincial wildlife directors, ECCC observers, NGOs and private partners. Survey respondents and interviewees characterized the internal WHC governance structure as clear and appropriate for collaboration between project recipients and ECCC representatives in both the regions and headquarters.

## Ecological Gifts Program

External interviewees indicated that the overall governance structure of the EGP is efficient and appropriate. However, both internal and external interviewees mentioned that donors lack knowledge of the tax implications of the EGP. ECCC and the Canada Revenue Agency are developing a memorandum of understanding to clarify the processes between the two departments and to improve administration of the program.

## Ramsar Convention

The evaluation findings with respect to the governance of the Ramsar component are mixed. Overall, the governance structure of the Ramsar component appears clear and appropriate. However, interviewees identified opportunities for improvement in clarifying the roles and responsibilities related to the operation and management of Ramsar designated sites in Canada. Interviewees also reported that there is room to improve communications after the initial site designation between Ramsar site managers and the provinces and other federal departments, particularly the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Parks Canada Agency.

### 4.3 Program delivery

**Findings:** The various components make effective use of leveraging mechanisms to expand the ECCC funding provided, to achieve habitat conservation results in an efficient manner. The use of external partners to deliver program components is also viewed as an efficient approach. For the most part, the administrative and operational practices of the various program components appear to be working well, with no significant inefficiencies identified.

## Overall

Three of the five HCP Program components—NACP, NAWMP and WHC Stamp Initiative—make use of funding and leveraging mechanisms from various partners to contribute to achieving outcomes related to land securement and habitat management.

[Table 14](#) presents a high level summary of the ECCC expenditures and funding from 2010-11 to 2015-16, as well as funding from other partners, for each of the HCP Program components (see [Appendix A](#) for detailed expenditures). It also includes the total land secured and land managed for the same period, by component. Hectares reported by program component are not mutually exclusive.



Comparisons between components should be made with caution because of the differences in focus, approach and underlying agreements that guide delivery, as well as variations in reporting assumptions. However, the table shows the important role of contributions from other partners. It also reflects the variations in delivery costs to ECCC associated with involving partners in the delivery of the component.

**Table 14: program costs, land secured or retained and land managed by implementing stewardship actions, by program component, from 2010-11 to 2015-16**

Program costs and land secured or managed	Natural Areas Conservation Program	North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)	Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative	Ecological Gifts Program	Ramsar Convention
<b>Funding</b>					
ECCC salary and O&M	N/A	\$4,110,000	\$17,000	\$6,751,000	\$361,000
ECCC G&Cs	\$131,865,000	\$13,979,000	\$10,304,000	\$376,000	\$1,230,000
Contributions from partners	\$301,428,000	\$543,942,000	\$53,740,000*	N/A	N/A
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>\$433,293,000</b>	<b>\$562,031,000</b>	<b>\$64,061,000</b>	<b>\$7,127,000</b>	<b>\$1,591,000</b>
<b>Land secured or retained and land managed by implementing stewardship actions (in hectares)</b>					
Incremental land secured (2010-11 to 2015-16)	276,000	325,000	N/A	43,000	20,000
Total land managed (as of 2015-16)	174,000	4,721,000	806,000	N/A	N/A

Source: Data received from Program as of 2017.

\* Since data was not available for 2010-11 on contributions from other partners for WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative, total contributions for that year were estimated as the average yearly contribution from 2011-2012 to 2015-2016.

### Natural Areas Conservation Program

The 2012 evaluation of the NACP found that the NCC was efficient in delivering the program and had exemplary administrative and operational processes. The current evaluation also found that the NCC's strong science-based approach contributes to efficiencies. It enables the NCC to be highly targeted in establishing conservation priorities and acquiring properties that address them. Interviewees were of the view that the NACP's approach of providing funding directly to the NCC to manage program delivery is more efficient than if ECCC were to undertake this role.

During the current evaluation timeframe, the NACP component matched the approximately \$132 million in G&C funding received from ECCC with approximately \$301 million in funds from other sources. This represents an overall ratio of approximately 2.3:1 or \$2.29 leveraged for every \$1 received.

Interviewees and survey respondents expressed the view that the ECCC funding could be spread more broadly. About half (51.3%) of survey respondents suggested that the funding eligibility criteria for OQOs were appropriate. However, some external stakeholders in both the survey and interviews said that it would be more efficient if ECCC resources were either distributed by ECCC to a wider base of conservation-based NGOs or if the OQO component of the NACP were more accessible. In response to a similar conclusion made during the 2012 evaluation of the NACP, the NCC developed a renewed OQO program. Among other changes, the renewed OQO program introduced a limit of \$250,000 per project for OQO program funding and limited the allowed number of project applications to 1 per organization.

### **North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)**

Interviewees reported that working with external government partners for the delivery of NAWMP works well. These partners are better positioned to leverage the funding received and build personal relationships in the communities. Similarly, the case study evidence showed that working directly with private landowners and with the agricultural community to conduct conservation stewardship activities is an efficient and effective approach. Interviewees indicated that regional HJVs are a strength in the design and delivery of NAWMP. The majority (96%) of survey respondents agreed that the HJVs are the appropriate mechanism for carrying out the goals of NAWMP.

Canadian federal sources, including ECCC, represent \$380 million (17%) of the overall \$2,218 million in funds that contributed to NAWMP goals in Canada from 1986 to March 2016 (see Table 15). Similarly, this represents only 33% of the overall \$1,143 million from Canadian sources that contributed to NAWMP from 1986 to 2016. During the same timeframe, the four Canadian HJVs:

- secured 8.1 million hectares of land
- influenced 56.4 million hectares
- enhanced 1.4 million hectares
- managed 4.7 million hectares

As of 2010, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act requires that up to half of the U.S. funding for Canadian projects be matched with contributions from other federal and non-federal sources. This requirement has helped Canadian conservation efforts and has had an impact on Canadian conservation capacity with minimal federal funding. As a result, the contribution level for wetland conservation has increased, which is having a greater influence on land retention, management and enhancement.

**Table 15: contributions in support of North American Waterfowl Management Plan in Canada, 1986-2016 (\$CAD)**

Country and jurisdiction	Contributions	Percentage of overall total
U.S. - federal	\$569 million	25.7%
U.S. - non-federal	\$506 million	22.8%
<b>U.S. - total</b>	<b>\$1,075 million</b>	<b>48.5%</b>
Canadian - federal	\$380 million	17.1%
Canadian - provincial and territorial	\$307 million	13.8%
Canadian - other	\$456 million	20.6%
<b>Canadian - total</b>	<b>\$1,143 million</b>	<b>51.5%</b>
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>\$2,218 million</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: [Habitat Matters: 2016 Canadian NAWMP Report](#)

### Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative

Survey respondents generally considered the administrative processes of this program component to be efficient and well-functioning. The majority (71.4%) agreed that the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative's program decisions are made in a timely manner. However, interviewees identified two opportunities for WHC to improve administrative processes and other operational efficiencies.

- The price of Canadian Wildlife Conservation Stamps has remained unchanged since 1998. Stamps are sold for \$8.50. They are affixed to the Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permits, which are also sold for \$8.50, for a total cost of \$17. At the same time, there has been a decline in the sale of waterfowl hunting permits. Several interviewees suggested that the price of stamps be raised to increase revenues for conservation.
- A more robust administrative process is needed to reconcile revenues and transfer money to the WHC, to improve alignment with the hunting season. Electronic permitting was identified as a potential solution. Documentary review indicated that steps in this direction have already been taken. As of August 2015, hunters can purchase the stamp online and the e-permitting system is accessible to hunters 24/7.

Since 2010-11, the WHC has invested \$10.3 million on funded projects, while the total funding from other partners is estimated at approximately \$53 million. However, this program component primarily (95%) supports projects conducted as part of the NAWMP component. As such, it is likely that much of this funding is also accounted for in funding for the NAWMP component.

### Ecological Gifts Program

EGP land securement is driven solely by donors, so it was not possible to make an accurate assessment of land secured in relation to money spent. Instead, EGP expenses pertain mainly to the processes of donation, including assessing market value, certifying property.

The EGP engages in program tracking, which includes the creation and maintenance of an Ecogifts database, and in managing and streamlining of the donation process. A majority of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that EGP program decisions regarding certifying fair market value (55%), and certifying property as ecologically sensitive (60%) are made in a timely manner. Information and instructions about making an ecological gift are available online. The EGP has also published the [Canadian Ecological Gifts Program Handbook](#), which outlines information on ecological gifts and provides a checklist on the process of donating under the EGP. However, key informants indicated that website instructions for the EGP component could be made clearer for landowners who may not be familiar with the appraisal processes and financial concepts of the application procedure.

## Ramsar Convention

Canada fulfils its international commitments to the Ramsar Convention, including submitting [national reports](#) related to Canada's implementation of the Ramsar Convention. This is done in a manner that keeps incremental spending specific to Ramsar to a minimum. During the evaluation period, spending for this component represented 1% of the overall HCP Program spending.

### 4.4 Performance data collection

**Findings:** The five HCP Program components collect and report performance data. However, it is difficult to collect data and report on results at the overall HCP Program level. Overlap in reporting by the components means that some double counting occurs. Further, although three of the components have logic models, there was no overall logic model for the program when the evaluation was conducted. These issues are being addressed by performance measurement planning related to implementing the 2016 TB [Policy on Results](#) and the introduction of revised reporting procedures to address the issue of double counting.

## Overall

Although performance data is available for each of the HCP Program components, the evaluation was not able to compile a clear picture of overall performance for the HCP Program. Overlap between reporting on the various components would result in double counting if the reports are aggregated. However, the department has recently introduced measures to address the issue of double counting between components. For example, as of 2014, the program ensures the NCC subtracts ecogifts donated under the EGP from its reporting for the NACP and program representatives work closely with the WHC and other partners to avoiding duplicated reporting between NAWMP and the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative in the NAWMP National Tracking System.

During the evaluation timeframe, there was no cohesive logic model or reporting mechanism in use for the program. To address this issue, an overall program logic model is being developed as part of the implementation of the TB [Policy on Results](#).<sup>11</sup>

### **Natural Areas Conservation Program**

The NACP has a logic model and performance data for the component is reported as a “year in review” in the [NACP Annual Progress Report](#), which is made public. This report details the number of hectares of land protected over the course of the reporting year. Overall, the NCC sets clear and specific goals and targets for each fiscal year and publishes reports on the progress towards their achievement. The NACP relies on strong compliance monitoring and land information systems to support performance measurement.

### **North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)**

NAWMP collects performance data and reports on the results. The program’s four Canadian HJVs report on performance data related to habitat that was retained, enhanced, managed and influenced<sup>12</sup> for their respective habitat areas. This information, along with data from other partners, is tracked through the NAWMP National Tracking System and is collated in an annual report titled [Habitat Matters](#). NAWMP data related to retention is also tracked through the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and has been reported via the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators.

ECCC targets for NAWMP are developed by adding individual targets established in the implementation plan of each HJV. These are based on overall NAWMP objectives identified as part of the NAWMP’s 2012 revised goals.

### **Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative**

As of 2012, this program component has a logic model and has implemented a Performance Measurement Framework, with 10 performance indicators. Performance reporting requirements have been incorporated into the grant application process, to support the collection of individual project details for each funded project. This data is presented in the [WHC Annual Report](#), which highlights the grant distribution accomplishments for the reporting year, including information on conservation activities and the amount of land conserved, among other indicators.

### **Ecological Gifts Program**

The EGP has a detailed logic model, with defined outcomes, outputs and activities that address each of its core activities.

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<sup>11</sup> This issue will be addressed in the Performance Information Profile for the Habitat Conservation and Protection Program, which is the program that these activities will fall within when the department transitions to the Departmental Results Framework in 2018-19.

<sup>12</sup> This refers to direct actions taken by landowners and land managers of conservation agencies that protect or enhance wetland or associated upland habitats without legal or binding agreements. These direct actions result in applied land-use changes.

The EGP monitors program expenditures, results and activities. It reports on areas protected under the EGP and the informal monitoring of the gifts by partners and regional coordinators. EGP program achievements are reported as a whole because donation amounts vary from year to year. The most recent cumulative and individual results are published in [ECCC's 2015-16 Departmental Performance Report](#).

### **Ramsar Convention**

ECCC acts as the administrative authority for Canada's commitments under the Ramsar Convention and helps to prepare Canada's report to the Conference of Contracting Parties (COP). The [most recent report](#) was completed in 2015 for COP12.

## 5. Conclusions, recommendations and management response

### 5.1 Conclusions

The HCP Program supports a mix of mechanisms that contribute to wildlife habitat protection and conservation through partnerships in the conservation community. The program includes many internationally accepted best practices in wildlife habitat conservation.

#### Relevance

The HCP Program is aligned with the federal government priorities for wildlife habitat conservation, including the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy's goals and targets related to conserving and restoring ecosystems, wildlife and habitat.

ECCC's involvement in the HCP Program is consistent with federal and departmental roles and responsibilities set out in a number of Acts, related to securing and protecting ecologically sensitive habitat. It also supports a number of international commitments, including those associated with NAWMP, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ramsar Convention.

#### Performance

With respect to expected results related to land securement, there has been an increase in the area of suitable habitat protected over the years. The NACP and the EGP have exceeded their securement targets and NAWMP is making significant progress towards meeting its 2017 target. While four of the five HCP components contribute to protecting habitat through long-term land securement, it is currently not possible to identify the total amount of land secured under the HCP Program because the results presented for the various components may overlap.

With respect to expected results related to habitat management and stewardship, each of the HCP Program components contributes to increased levels of habitat management and land stewardship. There is evidence that best practices and guidelines, as well as processes and requirements for the management of secured properties, are in place.

- Management plans have been a successful aspect of the NACP; the NCC's science-based conservation planning approach ensures that secured properties are managed to contribute to biodiversity targets and long-term conservation.
- NAWMP activities have implemented science-based habitat conservation and management plans using an adaptive management approach.
- The WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative has supported habitat management by promoting awareness about waterfowl habitat conservation and by contributing to habitat management initiatives under NAWMP.
- Management plans have been developed for the majority of Canadian Ramsar sites.

Evaluation findings highlight the importance of engaging a broad range of partners and stakeholders in habitat conservation efforts, and of raising public awareness about HCP Program activities. The program has made progress with regard to expected results related to stakeholder

participation and engagement. Several program components display good overall levels of engagement and participation. However, the evaluation findings suggest there is still room for improvement.

- Though the NAWMP component is often mentioned as a role model of co-operation among public and private stakeholders at various levels, agricultural, forestry and indigenous stakeholders have been under-represented.
- The opportunity to increase participation levels in the EGP by increasing awareness levels among potential donors, such as those who may possess important habitat, was identified.
- The WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative could benefit from further efforts to improve awareness of how the stamp funds are used in an effort to increase stamp sales.

The governance structures of the individual HCP Program components are clearly defined, appropriate and mostly efficient. However, a gap was identified in terms of any overarching governance to provide consolidated strategic planning across the various HCP Program components. This would support a more coordinated and integrated approach to priority setting and also enable greater collaboration, communication and efficiencies within the program.

The various components make effective use of leveraging mechanisms to build on ECCC funding and achieve habitat conservation results in an efficient manner. The use of external partners to deliver program components is also viewed as an efficient approach. For the most part, the administrative and operational practices of the various program components appear to be working well, with no significant inefficiencies identified.

All HCP Program components collect and report performance data. However, it is difficult to collect data and report on results at the overall HCP Program level as overlap in reporting by the components would result in some double counting. Although three of the five components have logic models, there was no overall logic model for the program at the time of the evaluation. Both these issues are being addressed by the recent activities related to the implementation of the [TB Policy on Results](#) and the introduction of revised reporting approaches. As a result, a recommendation related to performance measurement has not been included at this time.

## **5.2 Recommendations and management response**

The following recommendations are addressed to the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Canadian Wildlife Services, as the senior departmental official responsible for management of the Habitat Conservation Partnerships Program.



## Recommendation 1

### **Recommendation 1: Take appropriate actions to increase participation of targeted stakeholders in program areas where they are under-represented.**

Although the program successfully engages a broad range of stakeholders in habitat conservation, shortcomings were identified related to levels of awareness and the participation of certain stakeholder groups for some Habitat Conservation Partnerships (HCP) Program components.

In particular, an absence of federal and provincial agricultural partners and agriculture and forestry industry stakeholders was identified for the NAWMP component. Indigenous stakeholders were also identified as being inadequately represented. Because much of the current conservation landscape is driven by these partners, their absence was noted as having an impact on overall conservation efforts moving forward.

The evaluation also identified that the EGP has an opportunity to increase the number of land donations by informing landowners that they possess important habitat and by making them aware of the program and the important role they could play in habitat conservation.

The evaluation also flagged the potential for greater outreach to hunter groups, to improve awareness of how the stamp funds are used and to increase their levels of engagement.

### **Statement of agreement or disagreement**

The Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) agrees with the recommendation.

### **Management response**

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is reviewing the mechanisms it uses to seek external advice on the Government of Canada's Conserving Nature priorities and their implementation. Views will be sought from a wide variety of partners and stakeholders (such as non-profit conservation organizations, Indigenous organizations, resource-based private sector, hunting and fishing organizations).

All Canadian NAWMP partners recognize the importance of engaging forestry, agriculture stakeholders and Indigenous peoples in activities that contribute to conserving wetlands and increasing waterfowl populations. CWS Regional Directors in their roles as the chairs of the four Habitat Joint Venture Boards will bring this recommendation forward to their respective Boards for discussion, with the intent of finding ways to bring the perspectives of forestry, agriculture and Indigenous peoples into the work under NAWMP.

The EGP recognizes that attracting landowners of ecologically sensitive lands is key to the program's continued success. The EGP will continue to implement its 2017-18 communications plan, focused on informing landowners about the program and will evaluate future promotion/outreach needs.

ECCC will work with Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC) so that it continues to meet the terms and conditions of the current Contribution Agreement including effectively implementing activities aimed at reaching the hunting community and performance indicators for WHC's strategic plan are in place to monitor progress. Indeed, since the commencement of this evaluation, the WHC has

revised its strategic plan and performance indicators to aim outreach and conservation activities at the hunting community.		
Deliverable(s)	Timeline	Responsible party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of advisory mechanisms for conservation</li> </ul>	Spring 2018	ADM, CWS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an advisory mechanism for conservation</li> </ul>	December 2018	ADM, CWS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Habitat Joint Venture Board discussions on the engagement of agriculture, forestry, and Indigenous partners and the identification of next steps to engage underrepresented groups</li> </ul>	December 2018	Regional Directors, Stewardship and Regional Operation Directorate (SROD) (Habitat Joint Venture Board Chairs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2017-18 EGP promotional activities targeting landowners including social media and promotional video completed as planned</li> </ul>	April 2018	Director General, SROD and ECCC Communications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reassessment of promotional needs for EGP for 2018 and beyond</li> </ul>	June 2018	Director General, SROD and ECCC Communications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion with WHC so that activities targeting hunters are prioritized</li> </ul>	January 2018	Director General, SROD and WHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Strategic Plan activities targeting hunters, including providing grants for waterfowl recruitment projects and developing an information package about the Stamp Program for dissemination through hunter education/recruitment programs</li> </ul>	March 2019	WHC

## Recommendation 2

### **Recommendation 2: Introduce a consolidated approach to strategic planning to align priority setting across the various Habitat Conservation Partnerships (HCP) Program components.**

The various program components have their own governance structures that appear to be working well. However, a gap was identified in terms of an overarching governance that would provide for consolidated strategic planning across the various HCP Program components. This would support a more coordinated and integrated approach to priority setting and also enable greater collaboration, communication and efficiencies within the program.

#### **Statement of agreement or disagreement**

The Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) agrees with the

recommendation.

### Management response

CWS will develop a strategic plan for its Habitat Conservation Partnership Program that will be informed by:

- The 2017 Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development Report on Federal Protected Areas and Conservation Objectives
- This evaluation
- The Biodiversity 2020 goals and targets including Pathway to 17%
- CWS Strategic Directions
- Advisory mechanism for conservation

Deliverable(s)	Timeline	Responsible party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HCP strategic plan</li> </ul>	April 2019	Director General, Stewardship and Regional Operation Directorate (SROD)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CWS key strategic priorities are taken into account in the future development/renewal of HCP programs, where relevant</li> </ul>	April 2019	Director General, SROD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of an advisory mechanism for conservation</li> <li>• Establishment of an advisory mechanism for conservation</li> </ul>	Spring 2018  December 2018	ADM, CWS

## **Appendix A: description of the Habitat Conservation Partnerships Program**

The HCP Program funds projects and encourages partnerships and habitat conservation activities that secure, protect, improve and/or restore important and ecologically sensitive habitat for wildlife, including for migratory birds and species at risk.<sup>13</sup> The program provides mechanisms to engage with organizations and individuals, including with landowners, environmental non-governmental organizations and others. Through the HCP Program, wildlife habitats on private lands, provincial Crown lands, indigenous lands, or in aquatic and marine areas across Canada are secured and managed in ways that are compatible with habitat conservation.

This program contributes to the delivery of ECCC's mandate under the Species at Risk Act (SARA), the Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA), and the Canada Wildlife Act (CWA). The program also contributes to targets related to protected areas and the conservation and enhancement of wetlands that Canada committed to under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and to commitments made under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance.

The HCP Program consists of seven program components:

- Natural Areas Conservation Program (NACP)
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP)/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (NAWCC) Canada
- Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC) Conservation Stamp Initiative
- Ecological Gifts Program (EGP)
- Canada's participation in the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention)
- Expanding Family Oriented Conservation Programming
- National Wetland Conservation Fund (NWCF)

The evaluation looked at the first five program components from 2010-11 to 2015-16. The last two components (Expanding Family Oriented Conservation Programming and the NWCF) were added to the HCP Program in May 2014, when the Government of Canada announced the National Conservation Plan. They were excluded from the scope of this evaluation.

The five components addressed by the evaluation are described in greater detail below.

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<sup>13</sup> Species at risk refers to species assessed by the Committee on The Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) as endangered, threatened, or of special concern.

## Natural Areas Conservation Program

The Natural Areas Conservation Program (NACP) helps non-profit, non-governmental organizations secure ecologically sensitive lands to ensure the protection of ecosystems, wildlife and habitat. The program came into effect in 2007, when the Government of Canada provided \$225 million in funding as part of a commitment to conserve and protect Canada's natural environment. An additional \$20 million was announced with Budget 2013. In 2014, the NACP was renewed for another five years, with an additional \$100 million in funding.

To deliver the program, the Government of Canada entered into an agreement in 2007 with one grant recipient. Under this agreement, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) was responsible for holding, investing and disbursing the funds through a separately held Natural Areas Conservation Fund. The NCC uses the program's funds to support projects it undertakes. It also allocates some funding to other non-government conservation organizations (referred to as Other Qualified Organizations [OQO]), such as Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and provincial and regional land trusts and nature conservancies, to manage other projects. The NCC and the OQOs were originally required to provide matching funds for each federal dollar received in a ratio of at least 1:1. This requirement was subsequently revised so that a minimum of \$2 in matching funds is now required for every federal dollar received.<sup>14</sup>

Using a science-based process, the NCC and its partners work to acquire ecologically sensitive lands through donation, purchase or stewardship agreement with private landowners. Priority is given to nationally or provincially significant lands, lands protecting habitat for species at risk and migratory birds and lands that enhance connectivity or corridors between existing protected areas, such as national wildlife areas, national parks and migratory bird sanctuaries. The program's first agreement (2007) aimed to secure approximately 200,000 hectares of ecologically sensitive lands. This was expanded to 218,000 hectares, with the additional \$20 million investment in 2013. With the renewal of the program in 2014 for an additional five years, the program aims to:

- secure over 130,000 additional hectares of ecologically sensitive lands
- implement Property Management Plan actions on an estimated 120,000 hectares
- monitor the compliance of Conservation Agreements on an estimated 100,000 hectares of lands secured under the NACP since 2007, while providing for capacity development within the land trust community

The NCC is governed by a national board with support from seven regional boards. Together, these boards oversee all aspects of the NCC, including its management and activities. The NCC has established specific governance structures to deliver the NACP, including an Investment Committee that oversaw management of the Natural Areas Conservation Fund during the first NACP program; a Program Committee responsible for annual work plan and progress report reviews and approvals; and an OQO Committee focused on program activities conducted with OQOs.

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<sup>14</sup> Specific to the 2013 \$20 million investment, the NCC and DUC only required a minimum 2:1 match ratio in non-federal funds invested towards the securement of properties only. Under the renewed 2014-19 OQO program, the minimum match ratio is 2:1 for all funds.

## **North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)**

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) is an international action plan to conserve migratory birds throughout the North American continent. Developed in response to critically low numbers of waterfowl in North America, the plan was signed by Canada and the United States (U.S.) in 1986 and by Mexico in 1994. The goal of NAWMP is to return waterfowl populations to their 1970s levels by encouraging sustainable land use practices, improving habitat and protecting and managing wetlands important for all migratory birds.

In 2012, the following new goals were established for NAWMP:

- abundant and resilient waterfowl populations to support hunting and other uses without putting habitat at risk
- wetlands and related habitats sufficient to sustain waterfowl populations at desired levels, while providing places for recreational activities and ecological services that benefit society
- growing numbers of waterfowl hunters, other conservationists and citizens who enjoy and actively support waterfowl and wetlands habitat conservation

For the most part, external partners deliver NAWMP through Habitat Joint Ventures (HJVs), which are responsible for the overall planning, design and management of programs for key habitat areas. In Canada, there are four HJVs and three internationally linked Species Joint Ventures<sup>15</sup> that focus on providing critical science to inform the management of habitat or species of concern identified through NAWMP.

The implementation of NAWMP in Canada is enabled by the support of many partners, including federal, provincial/territorial and state governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals. In particular, funds are made available to Canada, the U.S. and Mexico through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA), which was enacted by the U.S. Congress in 1989. NAWCA allocates funds with matching grant requirements to wetland conservation projects in the three countries. Canadian projects require matching funds from both Canada (federal, provincial and non-government partners) and the U.S. (non-federal). Since the program's launch in 1986, U.S. federal and U.S. non-federal sources have provided approximately \$1 billion in funding. This funding covers nearly 50% of the total contributions for NAWMP in Canada and serves to significantly expand the reach and impact of wetland conservation efforts in Canada.

In Canada, administration of NAWMP and guidance for its implementation are the responsibility of the North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada) (NAWCC Canada) and the Habitat and Species Joint Ventures. Canada is also represented on the tri-national Plan Committee, which is responsible for:

- discussing international waterfowl issues

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<sup>15</sup> Activities related to the Species Joint Ventures are part of the Migratory Birds Program (sub-program 1.1.3) and as such, are not addressed in this evaluation.

- updating NAWMP every five years
- making recommendations to federal wildlife departments
- approving new joint ventures

NAWCC (Canada) also provides policy and scientific advice and develops communications and outreach programs related to wetlands and waterfowl.

The NAWCC (Canada) Secretariat is housed in the Habitat Conservation Unit of the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), which helps NAWCC (Canada) with its day-to-day operations. The NAWCC (Canada) membership consists of 19 partners. For a full list of members, consult the [NAWCC Canada Strategic Plan](#).

### **Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative**

Under this program component, revenues generated from the sale of the Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamps are transferred to Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC), a national non-profit charitable conservation organization. ECCC manages the production of the stamp and annually transfers the full amount of the revenue generated to WHC through a contribution agreement. During the evaluation period, the terms of the contribution agreements required that WHC transfer at least 80% of the funds received from ECCC to third parties for projects supporting wildlife habitat conservation initiatives across Canada, especially for waterfowl (leaving a maximum of 20% to cover administrative costs).

Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp is developed and sold on an annual basis. The stamps are purchased primarily by waterfowl hunters to validate their Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permits, and are also sold to print purchasers, stamp collectors, and individuals interested in contributing to the conservation, restoration and enhancement of wildlife habitat in Canada. WHC selects a new stamp image each year, through an annual art competition.

A significant portion of WHC's Conservation Stamp Initiative funds are directed to projects addressing the priorities identified by the four Canadian HJVs under NAWMP. Projects funded by WHC involve multiple external partners, including provincial governments and non-governmental organizations (for example, DUC, NCC). WHC also uses its funds to provide grants for regional and local habitat projects of importance for other migratory game birds, for public education, for research projects and for the [Murre Conservation Fund](#).

WHC is governed by a board of directors composed of two ECCC-appointed members, two representatives of the Provincial and Territorial Wildlife Directors and five members selected by the Board (Directors at Large) including representatives from provincial and territorial wildlife agencies and representatives from non-governmental national wildlife organizations. ECCC sits as an observer on the board. The board has three committees: the Executive Committee, the Finance and Audit Committee and the Nominating Committee.



## Ecological Gifts Program

Launched in 1995, the Ecological Gifts Program (EGP) provides a way for Canadians who own ecologically sensitive land to protect nature and leave a legacy for future generations. Under the terms of the [Income Tax Act of Canada](#) and the [Taxation Act in Quebec](#), the EGP offers significant tax benefits to landowners who donate land or a partial interest in land to qualified recipient organizations. Recipient organizations become responsible for the conservation of the donated land's biodiversity and environmental heritage. This responsibility lasts forever.

Key ECCC responsibilities related to the EGP include:

- processing application forms
- certifying the proposed property as ecologically sensitive
- approving the recipient to receive the ecological gift
- certifying the fair market value of the donation

A national secretariat and regional program coordinators manage the EGP. Among other tasks, the regional program coordinators help applicants and recipients with various aspects of the EGP process. The national secretariat works with the independent Appraisal Review Panel (ARP), which reviews appraisals submitted by donors, and makes recommendations to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Canada regarding the fair market value of ecological gifts.

## Canada's Participation in the Ramsar Convention

Canada is a party to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, known more widely as the Ramsar Convention. Wetlands of International Importance are recognized as having significant value, not just for the country or the countries in which they are located, but for humanity as a whole. The Ramsar Convention is an inter-governmental treaty that embodies the commitments of 169 member countries to maintain the ecological character of their Wetlands of International Importance and plan for the sustainable use of all of the wetlands in their territories.

As a signatory to the Ramsar Convention since 1981, Canada committed to:

- designating at least one Ramsar site and ensuring its effective management
- working towards the wise use of wetlands through national land-use planning, appropriate policies and legislation, management actions and public education
- cooperating internationally on trans-boundary wetlands, shared wetland systems, shared species and development projects that could affect wetlands

A total of 37 Ramsar sites have been designated across Canada, 17 of which are located partially or totally on national wildlife areas or migratory bird sanctuaries. 22 (59%) of all Ramsar sites are located on federal lands and are managed by federal organizations (ECCC, Parks Canada, the National Capital Commission).



As part of its responsibilities, ECCC contributes about \$200,000 annually, through an assessed contribution, to support the international Ramsar Secretariat. ECCC also prepares a [national report](#) that measures Canada's progress against the Ramsar Strategic Plan. The report is submitted to the Conference of Parties (COP), which meet every three years. ECCC's Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) represents the North American Region on the Ramsar Standing Committee, on a rotational basis with the U.S. and Mexico.

## Governance and management

Overall accountability for the HCP Program rests with the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of the CWS.

Prior to April 2016, the CWS's Habitat Conservation Management Division (now Stewardship Division) oversaw the HCP Program and most aspects of program delivery. The CWS's Wildlife Permitting Policy and Operations Section managed the sale of the Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp.

In April 2016, CWS went through a period of reorganization to become a separate branch, rather than a directorate of the Environmental Stewardship Branch. CWS's Stewardship and Regional Operations Directorate is now responsible for the HCP Program.

## Resource allocation

[Table 16](#) shows ECCC's total HCP Program expenditures for the five program components.

- Funding for grants and contributions (G&C) comprise the vast majority of the expenditures, representing 93% of total program spending.
- The NACP is by far the largest of the five components, accounting for approximately 78% of total spending and 84% of G&C expenditures.
- No salary costs are identified for either the NACP or the WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative because these components are delivered primarily by third parties (the NCC and the WHC respectively).
- While some ECCC program representatives dedicate time to these components (approximately 0.5 and 0.35 FTEs respectively), these individuals work on multiple programs and their time is coded to other components.
- ECCC staffing resources spent on all five components are estimated by program representatives as approximately 16.79 FTEs per year

The program's G&C projects (with the exception of NACP) are administered primarily under the authority of ECCC's umbrella contribution terms and conditions: Contributions in Support of Biodiversity – Wildlife and Habitat. The assessed contribution for Ramsar is identified as a separate transfer payment program in ECCC's main estimates (2016-17).

**Table 16: Canadian Wildlife Service expenditures by Habitat Conservation Partnerships Program component, from 2010-11 to 2015-16 (in millions)**

Program Component		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Total 2010-11 to 2015-16 (% of total HCP Program spending for five components)
<b>Natural Areas Conservation Program</b> FTE = 0.5 per year	Salary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	O&M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	G&C	\$21.7	\$33.695	\$24.029	\$11.208	\$18.732	\$22.5	\$131.865
	<b>Total</b>	\$21.7	\$33.695	\$24.029	\$11.208	\$18.732	\$22.5	\$131.865 (78%)
<b>North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)</b> FTE = 6.95 per year	Salary	\$0.39	\$0.546	\$0.522	\$0.678	\$0.491	\$0.679	\$3.306
	O&M	\$0.295	\$0.19	\$0.094	\$0.091	\$0.051	\$0.083	\$0.804
	G&C	\$2.421	\$2.032	\$2.632	\$2.736	\$2.032	\$2.086	\$13.979
	<b>Total</b>	\$3.106	\$2.768	\$3.249	\$3.505	\$2.573	\$2.888	\$18.089 (11%)
<b>Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative</b> FTE = 0.35 per year*	Salary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	O&M	\$0.003	\$0.007	0	\$0.008	0	0	\$0.017
	G&C	\$1.45	\$1.598	\$1.626	\$1.896	\$1.959	\$1.775	\$10.304
	<b>Total</b>	\$1.453	\$1.605	\$1.626	\$1.904	\$1.959	\$1.775	\$10.321 (6%)
<b>Ecological Gifts Program**</b> FTE = 8.55 per year	Salary	\$0.578	\$0.466	\$0.493	\$0.667	\$0.688	\$0.668	\$3.56
	O&M	\$0.51	\$0.613	\$0.508	\$0.52	\$0.511	\$0.529	\$3.191
	G&C	\$0.11	\$0.057	0	0	\$0.1	\$0.109	\$0.376
	<b>Total</b>	\$1.198	\$1.136	\$1.001	\$1.187	\$1.300	\$1.306	\$7.127 (4%)
<b>Ramsar</b> FTE = 0.44 per year	Salary	\$0.017	\$0.054	\$0.102	\$0.067	\$0.039	\$0.026	\$0.306
	O&M	\$0.001	\$0.019	\$0.008	\$0.008	\$0.012	\$0.006	\$0.055
	G&C	\$0.223	\$0.262	\$0.168	\$0.167	\$0.211	\$0.198	\$1.23
	<b>Total</b>	\$0.242	\$0.336	\$0.279	\$0.242	\$0.262	\$0.231	\$1.591 (1%)
<b>All Program Components</b> FTE = 16.79 per year	Salary	\$0.986	\$1.066	\$1.118	\$1.411	\$1.218	\$1.373	\$7.172 (4%)
	O&M	\$0.809	\$0.83	\$0.61	\$0.627	\$0.574	\$0.618	\$4.068 (2%)
	G&C	\$25.904	\$37.645	\$28.456	\$16.007	\$23.034	\$26.708	\$157.754 (93%)
<b>GRAND TOTAL \$</b>		\$27.698	\$39.54	\$30.184	\$18.046	\$24.826	\$28.7	\$168.994

Source: Extracted from Environment Canada's financial system.

\* Although salary is not officially allocated, FTEs coded to other HCP components (for example, EGP) also provide support to those components of the NCP Program.

\*\*HCP Program representatives confirmed that no G&C funding was approved for EGP in 2012-13 and 2013-14.

## Expected results

At the time of the evaluation, there was no approved logic model addressing all components of the HCP Program. However, for the purpose of the evaluation, the evaluation team developed a draft HCP Program logic model with identified expected outcomes. Program management reviewed the draft logic model and expected results during the evaluation planning stage. They agreed that it is an accurate representation of the program for the purpose of the evaluation.

For analysis and reporting and to avoid duplication, findings related to program performance are presented against three themes that include both the immediate and intermediate outcomes associated with that theme. These expected result themes are:

- land securement
- habitat management and stewardship
- participation and engagement

A mapping of the outcomes from the logic model to the three expected result themes used for reporting can be found in [Appendix B](#).

## Appendix B: expected results of the Habitat Conservation Partnerships Program

Theme	Natural Areas Conservation Program	North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)	Ramsar Convention	Ecological Gifts Program	Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative
<b>Theme I: land securement</b>					
<b>Immediate outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased area of suitable habitat and/or protected habitat for species at risk</li> <li>Protection of priority habitats is secured by landowners, NGOs, provinces and municipalities</li> </ul> <b>Intermediate outcome:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protection of priority habitats is achieved by NGOs (protection where legal securement of land is obtained by acquisition or other means and where those lands are managed for the purpose of conservation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<b>Theme II: habitat management and stewardship</b>					
<b>Immediate outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority habitats are managed sustainably by landowners, OGDs and NGOs</li> <li>Individuals and organizations responsible for land management adopt standards, guidelines and best practices to maintain and improve wildlife habitat</li> </ul> <b>Intermediate outcome:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildlife habitat is conserved through stewardship by Canadians, OGDs and NGOs (stewardship encompasses voluntary actions taken on land managed by individuals and organizations for the benefit of target species and their habitat)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Theme III: participation and engagement</b>					
<b>Immediate outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target audiences participate in conservation related activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

Theme	Natural Areas Conservation Program	North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)	Ramsar Convention	Ecological Gifts Program	Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative
<b>Intermediate outcome:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildlife habitat is conserved through stewardship by Canadians, OGDs and NGOs (stewardship encompasses voluntary actions taken on land managed by individuals and organizations for the benefit of target species and their habitat)</li> </ul>	•	•	•	•	•

## Appendix C: evaluation strategy

### Purpose and scope

The evaluation initially covered a five-year time frame, from 2010-11 to 2014-15, but was updated with financial and performance data from 2015-16 and additional program documentation from 2016-17.

The evaluation focussed on ECCC's activities related to five of the seven components of this sub-program, both collectively and individually:

- Natural Areas Conservation Program (NACP)
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP)/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (NAWCC Canada)
- Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC) Conservation Stamp Initiative
- Ecological Gifts Program (EGP)
- Canada's participation in the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention)

Expanding Family Oriented Conservation Programming and the National Wetland Conservation Fund (NWCF), the other two HCP Program components, were excluded from the scope of the evaluation. When this evaluation was conducted, they were still too new to allow for an assessment of their performance. An evaluation of the NWCF will be conducted in 2017-18.

### Evaluation questions

**Table 17: evaluation questions**

Relevance
<b>Continued need for the program:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a continued need for the program?</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with government priorities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the program aligned with federal government priorities?</li> <li>• Is the program aligned with Environment and Climate Change Canada's strategic outcomes?</li> </ul>
<b>Consistency with federal roles and responsibilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this an appropriate area for federal government involvement?</li> </ul>
Performance
<b>Achievement of expected results:</b> Assessment of progress towards expected results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent have results on land securement been achieved?</li> <li>• To what extent have results on habitat management and stewardship been achieved?</li> <li>• To what extent have results on participation and engagement been achieved?</li> </ul>

**Efficiency and economy:** Assessment of the degree to which the program is implemented in an efficient and economical manner

- To what extent is the cluster design appropriate?
- To what extent is the governance structure clear, appropriate and efficient?
- To what extent is the program delivery efficient and economical?
- To what extent is performance data collected?

## Evaluation approach and methodology

For each evaluation question, the evaluation used multiple lines of evidence consisting of both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods described below. Multiple data sources provide information from various perspectives, which helps for triangulation and validation of evaluation findings, thus increasing their accuracy and credibility and strengthening the validity of conclusions. The following methodologies were used to collect evidence for the evaluation.

### Document review

The evaluation team reviewed various types of documents, such as descriptive program documents, departmental and Government of Canada publications, relevant evaluations, reports, communications, research studies, performance and financial information and other internal planning and operational documents.

### Key informant interviews

37 key informant interviews were conducted with 39 respondents:

- 11 ECCC program staff and senior management
- 28 external stakeholders (NGOs, government, board/council members, site managers and international stakeholders)

### Online survey

After factoring in invalid email addresses, online survey questionnaires were sent to 871 individuals representing non-governmental organizations, government (federal, provincial, municipal), conservation authorities, private sector organizations, private individuals, universities and registered charities involved in one or more of the HCP Program components. 167 individual respondents completed the survey, for an overall response rate of 19.2%. The lower response rate (typical response rates are about 30% for this type of survey) may be due to the fact that respondents were only provided with two weeks to complete the questionnaire.

Many of the 167 respondents were familiar with more than one program component. As such, we received 276 completed program component responses.

The distribution of completed responses by program component is presented in [Table 18](#).

**Table 18: number of completed responses by HCP Program component**

Completed responses by program component	Completed responses	Percent of total
Natural Areas Conservation Program	45	16%
North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)	52	19%
Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative	80	29%
Ecological Gifts Program	71	26%
Ramsar Convention	28	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Case studies

To provide further insight, the evaluation team conducted six case studies (two projects from each of three program components: NAWMP/NAWCC (Canada), WHC Conservation Stamp Initiative and EGP). The NACP component was excluded from the case studies because information from an independent evaluation conducted in 2012 provided sufficient insight. Ramsar was also excluded from the case studies because of its lower materiality and risk. The six case study projects and their relevant timing are listed in [Table 19](#).

**Table 19: list of case studies conducted for the evaluation**

Program component	Case studies
North American Waterfowl Management Plan/North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust (2013-14)</li> <li>Canadian/Prairie/Parkland and Western Boreal Habitat (2011-2012)</li> </ul>
Wildlife Habitat Canada Conservation Stamp Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Murre Conservation Fund (2011-13)</li> <li>Southern Ontario Priority Wetland Habitat (2014)</li> </ul>
Ecological Gifts Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agricultural Land Donation in British Columbia trusted to the NCC for Protection (2013-14)</li> <li>Easement Agreement in Manitoba trusted to the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation for Protection (2011-12)</li> </ul>



## Appendix D: summary of findings

Criteria	Expectations met	Further work required	Priority attention required	Unable to assess
<b>Relevance criteria</b>				
Continued need for the program	•			
Alignment with federal government priorities	•			
Consistency with federal roles and responsibilities	•			
<b>Expected results</b>				
Land securement: The extent to which land has been secured (acquired or has come under protection)	•			
Habitat management and stewardship: The extent to which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- wildlife habitats are conserved through stewardship actions and managed sustainably through the creation, improvement, maintenance and management of wetland habitat</li> <li>- the program components, industry and organizations build and implement standards, guidelines and best practices to maintain and improve habitat</li> </ul>	•			
Participation and engagement: The extent to which target audiences participate and engage in conservation-related activities and are aware of conservation issues		•		
<b>Program efficiency</b>				
The extent to which the program's cluster design is appropriate	•			
The extent to which the governance structure is clear, appropriate and efficient		•		
The extent to which program delivery is efficient and economical	•			
The extent to which performance data is collected		•		

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