

Conservation Biology Habitat Conservation Plan Writing Checklist for Essay 3 Peer Review

(from our previous Moodle handouts and the style guide provided by the journal *Conservation Biology*)

Introduction to the Ecoregion

Concise listing, with in-text literature citations, of:

- _____ geographic location and physical geography
- _____ abiotic factors that structure / sustain the ecoregion
- _____ biotic factors and/or processes that typify the ecoregion when sustainably intact / healthy
- _____ reader is persuaded that this ecoregion has value (economic, aesthetic, etc.)

Defining the Problem

- _____ 1-3 biological problems that threaten the sustainable health of the ecoregion
- _____ 1-3 sociopolitical factors that cause or aggravate the biological problems
- _____ Relationship(s) among sociopolitical and biological problems are identified
- _____ Problems are summarized to persuade the reader that they are in need of a solution
- _____ Clearly described long-term goal (s) with clearly defined terminology
- _____ Long-term goal(s) support conservation of entire ecoregion (not just one species)

Plan of Work

- _____ 2 or more clearly described short-term goals
- _____ Each short-term goal directly addresses at least one of the biological and/or sociopolitical factors enumerated
- _____ Each short-term goal is easily explained to non-biologists
- _____ Each short-term goal is monitorable by accumulating biological data or sociopolitical action
- _____ The units for all collected variables (e.g., NPP, education effectiveness) are specifically listed
- _____ The frequency and expense of data collection is addressed
- _____ *All* biological data from short-term goal actions are listed
- _____ Bio- or sociopolitical factors not solved by the action plan are identified
- _____ Consequences of actions are considered (e.g., monitoring, enforcement, etc.)

Demonstration of Class Knowledge

- _____ Demonstrated knowledge of different ecological theories covered in class
- _____ Demonstrated knowledge of different management tools covered in class
- _____ Demonstrated knowledge of different data gathering methods covered in class
- _____ Class vocabulary used to replace long or awkward phrasing
- _____ Class vocabulary used correctly (e.g., “conservation” or “preservation”?)
- _____ Extraneous class vocabulary not included (not just trying to impress by using big words)

Demonstration of Information Literacy

- _____ Demonstrated detailed knowledge of this ecoregion
- _____ Demonstrated detailed knowledge of a single species' ecology or population dynamics in this ecoregion
- _____ Demonstrated detailed knowledge of similar ecoregions
- _____ Demonstrated detailed knowledge of management actions already known to be successful in this or other ecoregions
- _____ Demonstrated detailed knowledge of political and social structures affecting ecoregion, without unnecessary detail
- _____ Writer does not solely rely on a single reference to summarize ecoregion or its problems

Logical Argumentation

- _____ Each paragraph has a single assertion backed by evidence
- _____ Each paragraph's assertions are ordered in a logical sequence that leads to a single conclusion
- _____ Redundancy of ideas, phrases and words is avoided

Effectiveness in Writing

- _____ Only 0, 1, or 2 spelling errors
- _____ Other rules of American English grammar are followed
- _____ Correct use of commas, hyphens and semicolons
- _____ Abbreviations (incl. measurements, degrees) used correctly
- _____ Numerals spelled out unless they represent data
- _____ Non-humans are not personified or anthropomorphized
- _____ Taxonomic groups (family, species, etc.) formatted correctly
- _____ Tense is consistent throughout essay
- _____ Each paragraph linked by transitional phrases / sentences
- _____ Writing is not geocentric (does not assume reader is American)

Ability to Follow Instructions

- _____ Paper is written as an entire work without section breaks.
- _____ Length is 4-8 pages, not including literature cited. Tables and/or Figures are not required. If included, they count for the page limit.
- _____ 1 ½ spaced, 11pt Arial font, 1" margins on all four sides of paper, printed double-sided, stapled with name at top. Title must be 12 words or less.
- _____ Random sentence searches reveal no plagiarism
- _____ Comparisons with two of the references reveal no plagiarism
- _____ Language appropriate to college graduates with rudimentary biology background
- _____ Use of active voice
- _____ Avoids slang and non-professional phrasing
- _____ Omits unnecessary detail
- _____ American English grammar and spelling followed
- _____ All measurements written in metric units only
- _____ Title is clear, concise and informative and not overly dramatic
- _____ If table or figure used, it is referred to in the text in style of *Conservation Biology*
- _____ Tables and figures used only if they explain things more clearly than 1-2 sentences could or would strongly help to persuade the reader.
- _____ If figures/tables used, they are neatly drawn with the same justification and format as found in *Conservation Biology* articles
- _____ If figures/tables used, each has a descriptive but concise caption as a full sentence

Literature Cited

- _____ 8 or more total sources
- _____ 4 or more sources are peer-reviewed literature
- _____ Books, reports and articles found online are not cited as websites
- _____ Only instructor-approved websites are used
- _____ All literature listed is found in the body of the text
- _____ No in-text citations are missing from the Literature Cited
- _____ Follows format of *Conservation Biology*
(<http://www.conbio.org/Publications/ConsBio/Instructions/Style.cfm>)