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)