



# Best Practices for LCC Landscape Conservation Designs

*DISCUSSION DRAFT*

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## Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Landscape conservation design (Design or LCD) — a goal-oriented conservation planning process and set of integrated products — is of broad importance for achieving the goals of the LCC Network and of many individual LCCs. These Best Practices are intended to inspire and enable LCCs to develop and improve their landscape conservation designs in the interests of achieving shared landscape conservation goals. The Best Practices represent current thinking and practical suggestions from the conservation community and LCC practitioners on how to successfully develop relevant and useful landscape conservation designs. The Best Practices also are intended to respect the unique circumstances and self-directed nature of each individual LCC, while fostering a more consistent approach across the LCC Network. As such, no elements of these Best Practices obligate individual LCC partner organizations to any actions.

The Best Practices are grouped into six sections below. They are organized using the Integrated Convening, Assessment, Spatial Design, and Strategy Design (iCASS) framework (Campellone et al., in review) of landscape conservation design, and include a section on LCC context, and a section that includes additional NAS recommendations and overarching considerations.

The draft Best Practices also include perspectives from LCC landscape conservation design practitioners, the conservation literature (including the book entitled Conservation Planning (Groves and Game 2015), and address recommendations from the National Academies of Science Review of the LCCs.

*Please see Appendix A - Frequently Asked Questions - for additional context.*

## Chapter 2: BEST PRACTICES

### SECTION 1: Initiating, Developing, or Revising a Landscape Conservation Design in the LCC Context

#### TOPIC: The LCC Context

### 1.1 Best Practice: Start with an LCC.

- Basis: Each of the 22 LCCs, by their structure and function, already exemplify and have completed several of the core components of Design, including convening, partnership-forming, goal-setting, and collaborative governance. The process of forming each LCC resulted in the identification and **convening** of individual Steering Committees that are comprised of **key cross-jurisdictional, multi-sector landscape stakeholders** within each LCC's geographic area. Collectively, there are currently more than 280 unique organizations represented on LCC steering committees. Each LCC steering committee has subsequently chosen to **operate as a collaboratively-governed partnership, and has identified a shared vision, mission, or set of goals relative to landscape conservation for their partnership**, as well as shared landscape-level conservation objectives.

### 1.2 Best Practice: Recognize Self-direction and the Place of Design in an LCC's Work.

- Basis:
  - Self-direction: Recognize that **each LCC is a self-directed partnership that can choose or not** to achieve its goals via the process and products of landscape conservation design.
  - Each LCC provides valuable partnerships, science, and tools for landscape conservation even if it chooses not to support landscape conservation design within its geography.
  - Each LCC develops or supports a multitude of decision-support-tools and products and processes that, in and of them, may not be part of or related to a Design, but that nonetheless are useful for conservation and resource management decision-making.

### 1.3 Best Practice: Determine the applicability, interest, and roles of an LCC steering committee in supporting Design as an approach and set of products for developing and/or achieving landscape conservation goals for all or part of the LCC's geography.

- Basis: Determine how the LCC partnership can collectively achieve its vision/mission, or the purpose of the LCC, and if Design is a potentially useful approach. Does the vision or mission of the LCC, as expressed by the steering committee, include objectives or goals for landscape conservation that could be addressed via Design? If not, could the partnership benefit from setting goals and objectives to identify collective action? If so, engage the LCC steering committee in discussion about Design. Potential roles of the LCC Steering Committee in Design include (1) Articulating the landscape conservation goals and objectives needed to reach a vision for the future of landscapes within the LCC's geography; and (2) Deciding whether the LCC partnership should support landscape conservation design, via allocating LCC resources and attention, as a means of achieving the LCC's landscape conservation goals and objectives.
  - *Who might do this?* An LCC SC member, staff, or partner.
  - *What tools or communication pieces are available to support this dialog?* Reach out to thought leaders, respected members of LCC partnerships, and practitioners from other LCCs who have successfully engaged in Design to help with your Steering Committee's discussions.

## **TOPIC: Scalability and Operating as a Network of LCCs**

**1.4 Best Practice: Compatibility.** Consider compatibility with other LCC landscape conservation designs throughout the Design development process.

- Basis: The [LCC Network Conservation Science Plan](#) emphasizes the importance of ensuring that landscape conservation designs are compatible within and across LCC geographies so that they collectively contribute to an ecologically connected network of functional landscapes and seascapes.

## **SECTION 2: Convene Landscape Stakeholders (iCASS Attribute iC)**

### **TOPIC: Define and engage the Stakeholders that are the key participants for the Design, define their roles, and establish a planning process.**

**2.1 Best Practice: Identify and convene an inclusive set of partners or stakeholders** with a shared interest in conserving natural and cultural resources within the defined design geography. An obvious starting point is the set of organizations that have already been convened as part of each LCC steering committee, but it may be advisable to invite additional partners based on the location and goals/objectives of the design.

- Basis: to be successfully implemented, a Landscape Conservation Design (LCD) must serve the needs of the LCC partnership. Stakeholders drive the process and participate in all aspects of the design process (Campellone and others, in review). A value in the collaborative process is that by working together, partners can accomplish more than they could individually.

**2.2 Best Practice: Develop a regular meeting schedule and an effective governance structure** for the design process with defined roles for participants. For example, a leadership committee or core team that includes technical experts and influential managers to guide the process is one effective approach to governance.

- Basis: Regular meetings maintain momentum and enhance sustained progress in the project. Committees or technical teams can share the workload, divide responsibilities, and work more efficiently than a single body of partners.

**2.3 Best Practice: Agree Upon the Planning Context and Planning Process.**

- Basis: A clear understanding of the context and process (purpose of the design, decisions to be made, audience, constraints, and sideboards from previous planning efforts or law and policy) enhances efficiency, participation, and buy-in from partners. The Planning Context includes the purpose of the plan, decisions to be made, decision makers, audience, constraints, or sideboards from previous planning efforts or law and policy. The Planning Team and Process includes members, skill sets, organizations involved, team charter, management process, and roles.

### **TOPIC: Define the Scope, Fundamental Objectives and Desired Outcomes.**

These include the ultimate outcomes that the stakeholders hope to achieve from the LCD.

**2.4 Best Practice: Define the Design Scope.**

- Basis: The Scope is the strategic, geographic, and temporal “boundaries” of the Design.

**2.5 Best Practice: Identify Fundamental Objectives and Desired Outcomes** that the LCC partnership would like to achieve via the Design. Clearly identify the desired outcomes for the landscape, drawing from the vision, mission, or set of goals for landscape conservation that have already been identified by the LCC partnership.

- Basis: the design process will be most effective if partners agree upon a vision for what they would like to achieve before focusing on the steps and design needed to get there. Fundamental Objectives and Desired Outcomes include the ultimate outcomes in the Design that we hope to achieve — the ends not the means — and those things that we care most about: healthier forests, more native species, and improved livelihoods.

**2.6 Best Practice: Identify Conservation Targets and Indicators.** Identify a suite of conservation targets that collectively represent the desired outcomes of the LCD. The targets should reflect the ecosystem services and other societal benefits important to stakeholders.

- Basis: Conservation Targets (also called Conservation Features) are the elements of biodiversity, ecosystem processes, and social (human well-being) elements that are the focus of the Design. Indicators are what the LCC partnership plans to measure to determine what is happening in regard to the Conservation Targets or Fundamental Objectives. Good indicators are representative of the Conservation Targets or Fundamental Objectives, and measurable in a practical sense.

**2.7 Best Practice: Consider Change Agents and Risks.** In identifying desired outcomes for the landscape, consider future changes such as climate change, while preventing uncertainty about future trajectories of change side from paralyzing the discussion of outcomes. It may be a range of desired conditions that can be identified, or it is often easier to start with articulating undesirable conditions. Identify desired outcomes in terms of future changes and uncertainties but avoid excessive focus on uncertainty at this point as it may stall progress. Strategies to successfully articulate shared desired outcome include identification of a range of desired conditions or starting with articulation of undesirable conditions.

- Basis: Rapid climate and land-use change may preclude maintenance of current or historical conditions. Often, the trajectories of change themselves are uncertain. Successful LCDs include learning objectives that help participants plan and act in an adaptive manner. Risks are those factors considered most likely to influence the successful implementation of strategies.

**TOPIC: Build trust, ownership, and engagement in the LCD process. Use collaborative participatory processes throughout the LCD development process.**

**2.8 Best Practice: Build and maintain trust** among the stakeholders. There is no single approach for building trust, but practicing and encouraging honesty, transparency, careful listening, regular face-to-face meetings, open discussion and airing of disagreements, responsiveness to concerns, and compromise all can foster mutual trust. Trained facilitators can enhance trust, as well as expediting the collaborative decision making process.

- Basis: Trust building and maintenance is one of the most important yet challenging aspects of collaborative LCD. The LCD is much more likely to be accepted and implemented if participants in its development feel that their ideas and concerns are recognized in design and outcome.

**2.9 Best Practice: Use the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation** or similar tool to frame the LCD. Open Standards (<http://cmp-openstandards.org/>) is a well-vetted set of principles and best practices in adaptive management and results-based management. Other approaches are

also available (e.g., structured decision making based on PrOACT: Problem, Objectives, Alternatives, Consequences and Tradeoffs; SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats; influence diagrams; logic models; Strategic Habitat Conservation (<http://www.fws.gov/landscape-conservation/pdf/SHCHandbook.pdf>).

- Basis: a consistent and organized process that links actions to desired outcomes and helps make decisions among multiple alternatives will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the design process.

**2.10 Best Practice: Engage Stakeholders.** Have a series of events during the development of the LCD and throughout the LCD project area: workshops, symposia on the state of science, scenario planning or climate-smart workshops, etc. that engages stakeholders. Make the LCD as much about bringing people together around the science as it is developing the science.

- Basis: Regular engagement opportunities keep the information flow and progress fresh for participants.

**2.11 Best Practice: Frequent and Transparent Communication.** From the outset, develop transparent, accessible mechanisms to communicate among partners as well as broader audiences, using formats and placement that are accessible to target audiences, such as a website or web portal. A website should be easy to use, visually pleasing, and provide access to the diversity of project documents, reference materials, spatial data and tools that are components of the LCD.

- Basis: In a collaborative process with varying participation among partners and ongoing membership changes, mechanisms to clearly convey products and document decisions are critical to maintain a shared understanding during and after the planning process and to deliver results.

### **Section 3: Assessment of Current Conditions and Future Desired Conditions (iCASS attribute iA)**

**TOPIC: Convene experts, understand existing efforts, assess risks, identify and use best available science.**

**3.1 Best Practice: Assemble Experts.** Assemble a team of technical and non-technical experts representing relevant social, economic and environmental disciplines and local, traditional and indigenous groups (Campellone and others, in review).

- Basis: Desirable skills of team members include: understanding of cross-scale, socio-ecological processes and interactions; data availability, quality and objective vetting processes; software (e.g., GIS) operation and limitations; local resource management histories and organization interactions and relationships; effective communication of complex information. At least some of the team should represent resource decision-making organizations, others may be drawn from academia or science institutions or organizations. Include Tribes and aboriginal perspectives to integrate Traditional Ecological Knowledge with western science.

**3.2 Best Practice: Assess Existing Conservation Efforts.** Begin with synthesis of existing efforts, including what the LCC has completed to date, don't recreate the wheel. Conduct a data gap assessment.

- Basis: As with stakeholder engagement, one key way to avoid the planning-to-implementation gap (NAS 2015) is to ensure existing conservation plans and local data are well-understood and vetted at the outset of condition assessment. The obvious benefit is avoiding unnecessary duplication of analyses and allowing LCD spatial planning to build upon existing data and analyses. But LCD leaders also gain an early and deep understanding of existing conservation activities in the geography. This informs LCD strategic planning elements, couching strategically-placed conservation actions in terms of actions that local managers are already engaged in.

**3.3 Best Practice: Conduct a Situation Analysis.** Assess risks, vulnerabilities, and opportunities. Use the best-available science, traditional knowledge, and technologies to discuss, model and describe risks to and vulnerabilities of socio-ecological systems and conceptualize opportunities to move systems from current condition to desired future condition (Campellone and others, in review).

- Basis: Situation Analysis involves the economic, social, ecological, and political trends and opportunities within the socio-ecological system; it usually includes a conceptual model and assessment of threats to conservation features and may also include some analysis of enabling conditions for conservation and likely barriers to implementation. Assessment processes should identify the relevant state variables and potential management actions that will result in a change in those variables leading to a new landscape state. Products should include an assessment of vulnerability (sensitivity, exposure and adaptive capacity) of focal targets to climate and other stressors; depiction of observed change agents; estimates of uncertainty and the source of uncertainty; reasonable projections of intensity, duration and extent of change agents into a defined future time period; and narratives that describe information resources use, relevant ecological context, and justifications of data interpretations (Campellone and others, in review).
- Consider climate change in addition to other stressors. Physical or modeled data for many key landscape-scale stressors [change agents] are available. Those that are should be vetted for their utility in terms of reliability, management-relevance and interpretability. Because stakeholders will likely vary in their interpretations of these criteria, it is important that one or more sessions convene specifically around vetting the array of available data describing change agents and that reasonable consensus is achieved before data are adopted for integration into assessment and design.

**3.4 Best Practice: Use best available data;** engage Steering Committee and Stakeholders to identify emerging data.

- Basis: New data will continually be available. LCC leadership and analysts need to be aware of emerging data and models relevant to identified conservation targets, landscape stressors (change agents) and the vision and goals of the LCD, as possible. The counter to the perfect data set is recognition of uncertainty, some of which can't be accurately quantified or modeled anyway. LCDs should take a risk-based approach -- risk-based methods are well-described in the literature (Burgman, 2005), and can be integrated into conservation plans that will enable LCCs and others to implement strategies and actions in places that are more likely to succeed. Careful documentation (i.e., metadata) of datasets and analysis processes will ensure transparency and allow efficient integration of new data sets should they become available.

**3.5 Best Practice: Base Spatial Assessments on Objectives, Outcomes, and Targets.** Make sure spatial assessments build from Fundamental Objectives, Desired Outcomes, and Conservation

Targets.

- Basis: This best practice can be a real challenge because high priority conservation targets most valued by stakeholders are often data-poor targets, yet expecting timely emergence of an ideal dataset is not practical. Stakeholders and analysts must be creative and innovative, spending time thinking deeply about how surrogate datasets, indices, elicitation of expert opinion or modeled data can best represent status of focal targets. Again, documentation of devised conceptual relationships and data manipulations is critical so assessment outcomes can be explained, defended and replicated as needed. This practice also implies iteration if, for example, there is no confident way to represent LCD goals and targets with available data. In that case stakeholder would reconvene to identify alternate goals and targets that are high value and for which data is available.

### **3.6 Best Practice: Describe a Plausible Range of Future Conditions.**

- Basis: Considering a range of potential futures, via scenario planning for example, is a way to accept the large amount of uncertainty in planning for the future (see Rowland and others 2014: <https://www.fws.gov/home/climatechange/pdf/Scenario-Planning-Report.pdf>). By conceptualizing alternate scenarios, we can assess whether the vision, goals and objectives are feasible, subject to or robust to uncertainty, and identify management intervention points. The LCC Steering Committees and other stakeholders should discuss the pros and cons of the various scenarios. The resultant scenarios will inform subsequent steps, including deciding whether design actions are robust in multiple futures and/or identifying where action needs to be taken to steer away from undesired outcomes, even if linked to a specific future. Adaptive management often includes contingency planning, or ‘if..then...’ thinking.

**3.7 Best Practice: Address Uncertainty.** Consider and document sources of uncertainty and interpret in management-relevant terms; use to frame scenarios for initial discussion and later scenario analysis.

- Basis: One consistency every LCD is sure to encounter is uncertainty. There are at least four sources: uncertainty in our human understanding of how socio-ecological and physical systems function, uncertainty in the accuracy of baseline data, uncertainty in modeled or indexed interpretations of the data, and uncertainty in societal responses to changing conditions. Although sources of uncertainty have not always been explicitly expressed in the past, managers have been making decisions in an uncertain world. An LCD must be strengthened by directly addressing sources of uncertainty. By framing uncertainty in management decision contexts, stakeholder can embrace our understanding of uncertainty (and certainty) and co-develop a structured framework for making decisions, directing monitoring, and adapting strategies as uncertainty is reduced and decision-spaces are redefined. This is often accomplished through scenario analyses, which informs both spatial and strategic designs.

## **SECTION 4: Spatial Design (iCASS Attribute iS<sup>1</sup>)**

Spatial design provides a holistic approach in identifying where on the landscape desired functions and opportunities exist or could exist given change and uncertainty (Groves and Game 2016). Best practices are organized as: a) Inputs to the Spatial Design, and b) Creation of the Spatial Design.

## TOPIC: Inputs to the Spatial Design

**4.1 Best Practice: Selection and Understanding about Datasets.** Engage the stakeholders in understanding and selecting the datasets to be used as inputs into the design.

- Basis: Understanding and adoption of the LCD products depend on confidence of stakeholders that it has a sound basis, derived using appropriate and relevant information.

**4.2 Best Practice: Assembling Datasets.** Assemble appropriate spatial datasets that represent, or are indicators for, each of the conservation targets or features agreed upon by the stakeholder partnership and rule sets or logical algorithms used to identify locations of interest on the landscape. The datasets should possess geographic extent, spatial resolution, and units that are relevant to the conservation targets, change agents, and intended uses of the LCD. Limitations and uncertainties should be clearly documented and explained. Spatial datasets should be accompanied by metadata explaining their source, derivation, purpose, and limitations.

- Basis: This is an important step in maintaining the linkages between desired outcomes, the conservation targets associated with the outcomes, and a design that can benefit the conservation targets.

**4.3 Best Practice: Data Management and Accessibility.** Identify key datasets and ensure that those versions are maintained and accurately documented as permanent records of the LCD.

- Basis: After agreeing on baseline data, it is important that all analyses use that data consistently; inconsistent use during parallel analyses may skew results. Ensure key data are properly documented and accessible to all stakeholders.

## TOPIC: Creation of the Spatial Design

**4.4 Best Practice:** Actively involve stakeholders in determining the types of design products that will be developed, addressing trade-offs among multiple desired objectives, and reviewing draft design products.

- Basis: Continued involvement with stakeholders in the design process will improve the quality of final products and enhance the trust building essential for an effective process.

**4.5 Best Practice:** To the degree consistent with design objectives, configure the design to reflect large-scale landscape processes and the benefits of an interconnected network of landscapes and waterscapes. Such benefits include representation of natural and cultural diversity; resiliency to current stressors and future change; redundancy; complementarity; and connectivity to allow animals and plants to move and disperse over time.

- Basis: the spatial design will be most effective if it is more than the sum of the parts (the individual locations). Taking into account large-scale process and connectivity will enhance the long-term viability of the design and its linkages to neighboring geographies.

**4.6 Best Practice: Accessibility.** Design products should be clearly documented and communicated for users, with readily accessible information explaining the significance of mapped locations and how they were derived.

- Basis: For widespread acceptance of the design products, it is important for users to understand what they are intended to do and to have confidence in how they were developed.

## SECTION 5: Strategy Design (iCASS Attribute S<sup>2</sup>)

Strategy Design is complementary to Spatial Design, and identifies the potential roles and opportunities for partners and stakeholders in implementing conservation actions in focal (or priority) areas as identified in the Spatial Design process- thus linking planning to action. It allows interested stakeholders to answer the question of “who does what, and where?” in accomplishing the objectives of the LCD. (Campellone and others, in review). Importantly, it should be recognized that LCCs do not have management authority. It is the individual organizations and agencies that are partners in the LCC, and not the LCC Partnership itself, that have authorities and resources for conservation delivery within their jurisdictions, authorities, and missions. Strategy Design provides information that enables these individual LCC partners, as interested and participatory stakeholders in the Design, to decide how and whether to voluntarily align their conservation delivery to support achievement of the LCD’s mutual objectives while also meeting their individual missions, mandates, and authorities.

**5.1 Best Practice: Integration.** Closely integrate the spatial design with strategies and actions to achieve the desired objectives. Spatial products should be clearly related to available strategies, and selected strategies should have corresponding spatial products.

- Basis: Desired outcomes can only be achieved if mechanisms to achieve the outcomes of the the design are available and implemented.

**5.2 Best Practices: Strategies.** Strategies selected should be associated with a logic model, results chain, or theory of change that connects the actions to the desired outcomes (objectives) for identified conservation targets. They also should be selected using an evidence-based approach that demonstrates that they are likely to succeed. Risks and assumptions associated with the strategies should be considered and clearly documented.

- Basis: Poorly selected management strategies may be ineffective, wasteful, and even counter-productive. To enhance the effectiveness of the design, it is important to identify strategies with a reasonable likelihood of success. The *Range of Strategies* are the different strategies or major interventions that are under consideration for use in the LCD and a rationale for how decisions will be made to focus on certain strategies and not others. *Strategy Selection and Theory of Change* involve the strategies that an LCD has selected to implement and a rationale for how and why those strategies will be implemented.

**5.3 Best Practices: Involve stakeholders** in identifying the relevant restoration, management, and maintenance/protection strategies; addressing resources needed to implement the strategies; and developing a high level work plan that identifies who is responsible for which actions and where. Collective actions and mutually-reinforcing activities among stakeholders are likely to be more effective than uncoordinated actions.

- Basis: to address the “planning-to-implementation gap,” it is essential that stakeholders take an active role during the planning process to develop approaches for putting the LCD into practice in a way that achieves tangible, on-the-ground conservation benefits over time.

## **SECTION 6: Additional Important Components as per NAS Recommendations**

### **6.1 Best practice: Develop an Executive Summary.**

- Basis: This is perhaps the most important section of the Design as many readers won't get beyond it; also a useful section for fundraising and outreach. Include an Executive Summary.

### **6.2 Best Practice: Summarize the Key Data and Knowledge Used in the Design.**

- Basis: Data and Knowledge are a summary of the types of data, knowledge (expert, local, traditional), and associated metadata that were used in the plan.

### **6.3 Best Practice: Develop a Monitoring Program for the Design.**

- Basis: This is a plan for what actions will be taken during the Design to measure progress and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and actions.

### **6.4 Best Practice: Conduct Work Planning.**

- Basis: Work Planning involves a detailed timeline of actions and tasks required to implement the Design, who is responsible, and proposed deadlines.

### **6.5 Best Practice: Assess Budgeting and Fundraising Needs.**

- Basis: **Budgeting and Fundraising** involve detailed assessment of the staff and financial resources needed to implement the strategies and actions and a realist fundraising plan to ensure that these resources are in place.

### **6.6 Best Practice: Develop a Communication Plan.**

- Basis: Communication involves a summary of the different types of internal and external communications that will take place related to the project (e.g., websites, press releases, blogs, and field trips).

### **6.7 Best Practice: Develop an Operational or Implementation Plan.**

- Basis: Operational or Implementation Plan provides details on how the Design will be implemented.

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## Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions

### ***Why develop these Best Practices?***

Landscape conservation design has been proposed and broadly supported as a strategic and efficient approach and set of products for advancing the landscape conservation goals of the LCCs. The LCCs and the conservation community have gained valuable experience in the practice of Design, and the LCC Network now desires to consolidate and share this experience in a unified document for the benefit of individual LCCs the LCC Network as a whole.

This interest is further supported by the NAS Review of LCCs, which found that existing guidance and Designs by the LCCs fall short of what planners, scientists, and practitioners will need to develop adequate landscape conservation plans and strategies that can be implemented in a manner to achieve conservation outcomes. The NAS found that Designs are important outputs to guide and improve resource management, and that how Designs are implemented will determine whether ends objectives can be accomplished. LCCs can demonstrate how they contribute to on-the-ground conservation by developing — as part of the landscape conservation design — a good theory of change, a monitoring program, and a clear work plan.

### ***Why include the LCC adjective in “LCC Landscape Conservation Designs”?***

The focus of these Best Practices is on the population of Designs that are **supported by an LCC Partnership**. These Best Practices are being developed by the LCC community for the LCC community.

### ***What indicates the LCC nexus (i.e., that a Design is an “LCC Design”)?***

If the LCC steering committee chooses to **support** a landscape conservation design for the purposes of facilitating landscape conservation within some or all of the LCC’s geography, then the Design is considered to be an “LCC landscape conservation design”. “Support” can mean that the LCC steering committee has chosen to undertake; allocate resources for; facilitate; endorse; or adopt landscape conservation design within some or all of the LCC’s geography.

### ***What is an “LCC Partnership”?***

In the context of these Best Practices, an LCC Partnership is the set of individuals and organizations that represent the LCC’s interests in a given landscape conservation design. This could include all or some of an LCC Steering Committee or a group otherwise empowered by the LCC’s steering committee to serve this role.

### ***Who is this Best Practices document for?***

LCC practitioners (coordinators, science coordinators, other staff, etc.) who are responsible for developing or revising one or more Designs on behalf of an LCC.

### ***Why is Design important?***

“It is to help ensure that conservation practitioners are making informed decisions on the strategies and actions that will help them achieve their ultimate conservation goals and objectives.” (NAS p134)

### ***What is the scope of these Best Practices?***

The Best Practices are not intended to be step-by-step instructions or detailed technical how-to’s of Design. Rather, they are intended to point out the practices and methods that are likely to result in improved outcomes.

***What are the expectations about how this Best Practices document can be used?***

These Best Practices are intended to be a reference and resource for those LCC partnerships that choose to support landscape conservation design(s) within their geographies. They are drafted from the perspective of helping a willing LCC partnership to play lead roles in undertaking the processes and developing the products of landscape conservation design for the primary benefit of the LCC partners themselves. There is no expectation that any single landscape conservation design would demonstrate all of these Best Practices.

Appendix B: Literature Cited

Appendix C: Glossary

Appendix D: Resources and Tools