

‘APPENDIX A’

**TO THE
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
OF
JANUARY 31ST, 2023**

**EMAIL CHAINS - 27 PAGES
AND
OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. A-3 - 18 PAGES**

From: Jake [jaked@manitoulinplanning.ca]
Sent: January 16, 2023 4:48 PM
To: 'Judith Jones'
Cc: 'Theresa Carlisle'
Subject: NHS Comments
Attachments: J Jones_NHS_Comments_Nov_18_2022_Comments_January 16 2023.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hello Ms. Jones,

Further to your comments regarding the Natural Heritage System provided to this office on November 18, 2022, please find attached my replies regarding the issues you raised.

Sincerely,

Jake Diebolt
GIS Technician
Manitoulin Planning Board
Email: jaked@manitoulinplanning.ca
Phone: 705-282-2237

Comments on the Draft Natural Heritage System Strategy

Updated on November 18, 2022

Judith Jones, Winter Spider Eco-Consulting
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

To the Manitoulin Planning Board:

First of all, I strongly object to your timing. If you close the comment period on November 21, 2022 and expect to approve the draft NHS on November 22, 2022, it means that you have no intention of addressing any comments. This is not acceptable. If you do approve the plan as it stands on the 22nd without addressing anyone's concerns, I would have to object to MMAH.

With these comments, my intent is neither to derail the Manitoulin Planning Board's process, nor to make it easier either for development or for conservation. My hope is that my comments are constructive and contribute to making the Natural Heritage System (NHS) as clear and easy to use as possible, based on the best knowledge we have.

Because I do EIS and other types of environmental studies, it frequently falls to me to explain to landowners why the policies are as they are, why they are sensible, and how they may affect the landowner's plans. End users of the NHS must have solid confidence in the policy and mapping or else people are going to fight the MPB over every proposal. For example, if a wetland boundary runs through the clearing where an applicant wants to build, then it should be possible to uphold why the line is there. If it can't be upheld, then there should be a mechanism clearly spelled out for how the line will be refined. This must be the case so that the applicant will be expecting the process.

I make my comments as an expert with 27 years of experience on the ground with natural heritage in the Manitoulin Region as well as 17 years doing natural heritage studies with AWS Environmental Inc. (Owen Sound) in southern Ontario. I am also certified as a wetland evaluator although it has been decades since I did an evaluation. I would be happy to provide my CV with details of my work if requested.

I have made my comments in red to explain policy and mapping information. My comments are from the perspective of the direction given to me by the board – that is, to map the system and draft policies to conform to the Provincial Policy Statement.

-Jake Diebolt, GIS Technician, January 16 2023

Part 1: GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT POLICY AND MAPPING

1) Other wetlands (OWs) should be mapped in the NHS.

The consultant's report recommended they be included. I am not suggesting any change in the draft NHS policy or in the Plan policy for how OWs are treated, but they must be shown on the mapping.

Wetlands not making up part of the NHS are shown on Schedule D and continue to have protection in policy.

Rationale: The situation of the OWs is the same as it is for alvars, which are mapped as an orange feature in the NHS and which have their own policy section in the D section of the Plan. It will be confusing to the end user why some features are shown in the NHS but OWs are not, especially when they are so prevalent on the landscape.

The Provincial Policy Statement requires that Provincially significant wetlands and coastal wetlands form part of the NHS, but does not specify all wetlands.

Furthermore, the distinction between a Coastal Wetland (mapped in the NHS) and an OW (not mapped) seems to be a policy decision, based on a 1 km distance from the coast or a connection to the coast. I see no reason to show only coastal wetlands and their inland connections, especially when the policy is exactly the same for both types of wetlands (because Coastal Wetlands are OWs if not evaluated).

Coastal wetlands are those within 2 km of Lake Huron, not 1 km, as per the PPS 2020 and the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System manual for Southern Ontario. Coastal Wetlands have their own policies applicable to them in the draft text separate from other wetlands.

On top of that, the mapping has stretched the truth somewhat in that it shows a lot of OWs as coastal wetlands—either by creating an artificial linkage to the coast or because they are within a 1 km distance of a coast (even though some of them are on top of the escarpment!—see Janet Head and Gore Bay East Bluff). A coastal wetland should be one that is at the shoreline or is linked to shoreline wetlands. Connecting a wetland to another type of shoreline is bending the definition. Clearly, there is a need to show all these wetlands, so rather than stretch the definition, it would be better to be truthful about what is being shown and state that unevaluated wetlands are shown as a precautionary measure since we don't know if some might be PSWs.

Coastal wetlands are defined in the Provincial Policy Statement as being on the shore of the great lakes, or on a tributary to the great lakes within 2 km upstream of the 100 year flood boundary. The Ontario Wetland Evaluation System manual for southern Ontario defines coastal wetlands in this way as well on Pg 142. I do not see further

criteria on the type of shoreline, elevation, watercourse, or the necessity for another wetland on the shoreline.

I recognize that wetlands on islands in Lake Huron are not protected, which puts Manitoulin in a unique situation because we are a large island with sizeable wetlands. We have a unique chance to protect what we have, which is important for source water protection, ground water re-charge, flood protection, and mitigation of climate change (wetlands are a huge carbon sink for greenhouse gases), etc. I urge you to be forward-thinking on this.

I am not aware of any policy that states wetlands on islands in Lake Huron are not protected. The PPS requires coastal and provincially significant wetlands be part of the NHS.

A final point: it is the function of a NHS to be able to consider how features and areas work in the overall landscape. Therefore, it is important to have as many D features as possible mapped in the NHS so that all of the landscape can be considered at once. Without wetlands, the functions and connections of the landscape can not be accurately visualized because so many pieces are missing.

Other Wetlands are shown on the North Channel Islands outside the planning area because they were in the provincial wetlands layer and are there by default. It's not hard to show all the wetlands—they are already there.

All wetlands are shown on Schedule D and continue to have protection under the Official Plan policies.

Notes regarding the text for OWs in the draft policy document:

Section D.4.(b) 2 –Other Wetlands

Paragraph 2. Boundaries

This paragraph is trying to do two things which should be separated: A) how boundaries are determined and B) when/how policy gets updated.

A) Based on the level of accuracy of the Provincial wetlands mapping (which frequently cannot distinguish between marsh, alvar, and old agricultural fields), there are going to be times when MPB needs to ask for an on-the-ground determination of the wetland boundary. For example, an end user may protest the Plan's wetland mapping if it restricts where they can alter their property, so a study would need to be done to determine the actual situation. This does not mean an entire provincial wetland evaluation. The text should allow for this contingency.

I am not sure current provincial policy supports delineation of wetlands outside an approved evaluation. From the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System Manual (Southern

Ontario) Page 17 : *"Existing wetland boundaries, regardless of their age remain in effect until they are revised and those revisions are approved by MNR."*

I suggest:

"The boundaries of OW's will be defined based on information from the Province, which may be ~~amended~~ updated from time to time. Boundaries of OWs may also be refined for accuracy as part of an EIS or other study."

B) About policy: As set out in the 1st policy on p1 of the draft NHS policy, boundaries of features and areas can be refined (through EIS or studies) and once accepted by the MPB, they come into effect on the date of approval. The policy in the second sentence of this paragraph seems to contradict that in that it says MPB will review and update OWs only during a review of the OP. I would delete this sentence here and add it to Paragraph 3, which deals with policy specifically for PSWs (see below).

Delete: Where new information becomes available, the Planning Board will review and update the policies related to unidentified wetlands as part of any subsequent review to this Official Plan.

This section is referring to new policy information received, not boundary mapping information.

2) Linkages

Because the OWs are not shown, some linkages are missing. In my comments for specific maps I have noted many places where linkages should be added. For example, in Assiginack, Francis Brook (which flows out of Turtle Lake) and its wetlands are a huge corridor that connects to the ravine below High Falls but nothing is shown. A corridor and linkage of this size should not be excluded because it is an other wetland.

This area has a linkage for the coastal wetlands and the fish habitat in the ravine below high falls.

On the other hand, the mapping of many linkages seems to be a little arbitrary—trying to connect things that are not really connected on the ground (so that important OWs can be called "coastal" and thus be shown). The wetlands on the 10th Line of Gordon are one example. These are not really connected to the coast, and the linkage drawn goes down a steep escarpment and across town streets. I think there would be good grounds to challenge a lot of these linkages in a study, so I think the methods and criteria used by the MPB to determine their locations should be clearly stated somewhere.

You can avoid having to worry about the validity of linkages to so called "coastal" wetlands by showing all the OWs and removing some linkage that may not really be there or that may connect elsewhere (not to a coast).

See previous comment on definition of coastal wetlands used from PPS 2020 and OWES.

The section of the text on Linkages identifies where they have been mapped. All watercourses connecting Coastal Wetlands to the lake have been identified as linkages. Watercourses have been confirmed via LIO mapping and/or aerial photos.

RE: 10th Line Gordon - This linkage follows a watercourse that drains into Gore Bay of Lake Huron, into a coastal wetland and designated fish habitat. Upper portions of this stream are ephemeral/ seasonal, but the policy does not appear to exclude seasonal or ephemeral streams when determining if a wetland is considered coastal.

I have made comments about specific linkages in the comments for the map.

3) Candidate ANSIs should be mapped in the NHS

No ANSIs have been mapped. There are 40+ candidate ANSIs. Even though they are not confirmed and thus not protected by policy, something about them should be mapped to show the same level of precautionary protection as unevaluated wetlands. Manitoulin has a lot of special cases—this is another one.

These candidate ANSIs have been identified for the natural heritage values they contain, and their potential boundaries are indicators that natural heritage features or areas are present. Unfortunately, the boundaries of many candidates were never refined (which would have been a later step in the usual process), and many of them are highly general and imprecise. However, I still strongly urge the MPB to map of candidate ANSI boundaries if they have been identified, or a centroid dot in if no boundary is available. This is needed so that the information is up front and available to users of the policy, who can then expect that a study or other steps may be necessary to clarify what features are present. However, if you are not willing to put the ANSIs in the mapping, then I suggest the following text as second best:

"[Approximately 45] candidate ANSIs have been identified in the planning area [not sure exact number without NEMI and islands—could figure it out] based on analyses by the Province. These candidates have not been legally confirmed and thus are not covered by provincial land use policies that prohibit site alterations within ANSIs. They are not shown on NHS mapping. However, these areas have been identified as candidate ANSIs because of the natural heritage values they contain, so their proposed boundaries or centroid locations serve as indicators that natural heritage features or

areas are present. These features and areas may or may not already be shown on NHS mapping.

"The Manitoulin Planning Board holds information on all candidate ANSIs. If development or site alteration is proposed within a candidate ANSI, an EcoSA or other study may be required to screen for potential presence of NHS features or areas not mapped and to determine whether these may be impacted by proposed activities. Approval for proposed activities follows the policies in this strategy for the specific NHS features present."

No ANSIs have been mapped because there are no ANSIs in our Planning Area, if new ones are designated they would immediately become part of the NHS.

I have reviewed the Gap Analysis 1995 you provided to the office, and delineated the sites within our planning area to the best of my ability on a separate map for the board to review. By my count there are 27 sites from that report identified in the current planning area, with the rest in other jurisdictions. As you mention, the work to evaluate these sites fully was never completed by the province, and completing the work of obtaining the detailed information necessary to support ANSI designation is outside the scope of the natural heritage system.

22 of the 27 sites identified in the Gap Analysis contain features identified in the draft Natural Heritage System mapping – though many are not shown on the schedules as they are endangered species habitat or otherwise sensitive.

The mapping is very general in nature and appears to largely be based on MNRF aerial photos (I believe these are from 1973 as they appear similar to air photos from that date that we have in the office) and NTS topographic maps at 1:50000 and 1:250000. However, in my review of the document I have not found specific information to confirm this – I am going from context and familiarity with similar maps.

Many of the maps are faded nearly to illegibility and the aerial photos are often too dark to be legible, and cannot be easily compared to our current aerial photos. Without many visible features to act as control points it is not possible to georeference these with a reasonable amount of accuracy.

It would be possible to add this to the mapping if the board directed, but I have serious concerns about the data accuracy – I believe digitization would magnify any errors already present in the mapping.

4) Escarpment

Escarpment as a feature should be shown on NHS mapping. It is the biggest linkage and natural corridor on our landscape. If escarpment is not going to be mapped in the NHS, then its function as linkage should be shown.

Escarpment areas are not required to be identified as a core area in the NHS by the PPS 2020. Currently, linkages are only mapped in conjunction with identified core areas. Escarpment lands are mapped on Schedule E and the policies of D.5 apply.

5) Peer review

Deer yard paragraph 7 says the MPB may require a peer review. This probably needs to be said up front as a general policy not just for deer yards, but for anything. There might be situations where that need could occur for any other feature. I suggest this wording to go at the beginning of the policy:

"The MPB may require a peer review to evaluate the conclusions of an EIS or other study and its analysis of potential impacts to NHS features and areas. The cost of a peer review will normally be borne by the applicant."

The general provision for Peer Review is in section D.7 of the Official Plan, which relates to standards for EIS.

6) Suggestions about use of the policy

I suggest the MPB has a responsibility to train the users of this NHS. It would be worthwhile after the NHS is adopted to provide a session to realtors, municipal staff, and anyone else interested in understanding what the policy does and how it works.

This is a good idea, alongside or after some general planning training.

7) Wording

Grammatical corrections and wording fixes are needed in a few places to improve the clarity and accuracy of the policies.

Paragraph 3 regarding features not mapped:

I suggest:

"There may be features and areas on the landscape that are part of the NHS but which are not mapped or cannot be readily mapped."

Agree this wording is less awkward.

D.4.(b).1 Provincially Significant Wetlands

Sentence is confusing:

"The boundaries of PSWs may be refined without an amendment to this Plan provided approval is obtained by (FROM?) the Province. The addition or removal of a PSW will not require an amendment to this Plan.

--Does this mean approval from the MPB obtained by the Province?? Or approval from the Province obtained by the MPB? Please clarify.

This should indeed be 'From' the province, as they establish what is or is not a PSW.

D.4.(b).4 Fish habitat

The language here is confusing. Policy and wording should be clarified.

"If it is determined [by the scoped EIS and] through consultation with DFO, that development will not impact fish habitat, then the requirement for an EIS may be waived..."

Presumably this means the requirement for a full EIS is waived? This is confusing because one can't waive the requirement for an EIS after it is already done. However, maybe a full EIS is still needed for some other NHS reason, so this would mean only that treating fish habitat as part of an EIS would be waived. This all needs to be spelled out much more clearly.

It is clear to me that this allows for EIS to be waived when DFO/MNR comments indicate an EIS would be unnecessary for a certain proposal. This should possibly be separate sections.

The text in 4. says a fish habitat mitigation/compensation assessment will be required. This appears to contradict the policy just stated in 3. which says that if it is determined that development will impact fish habitat, development will not be permitted. So when exactly is mitigation/compensation acceptable, and when is development not allowed? There is a subtle difference in wording: affect fish habitat vs. impact fish habitat. What are the differences in the level of alteration? The steps and thresholds to determine this need to be clearer.

I believe all this language is what was previously approved by the province in 2018, and I did not amend it.

D.4.(b).5 – SWH

Adjust grammar. First sentence is really awkward. Suggest:

"Significant wildlife habitats are ecologically important for the species, features, functions, and representation or amount of these values the habitats contain. SWHs contribute to the..."

This is a bit awkward, but the phrase is specifically referring to the *species* being ecologically important and then stating that the importance is because of the species' features, functions, representations or amounts.

5a. Modifications allowed to core deer yards: draft policy allows alteration if lots have a minimum of 90 m x 90 m and there is a subdivision agreement or notification agreement in place. This seems to make protection of the feature someone else's responsibility—whoever that is probably doesn't exist. Could the Manitoulin policy be more explicit to set out a suggested minimum % of cover to be retained?

Any OP Policy is only enforceable by a planning instrument such as a zoning by-law, site plan control, or other agreement enforced by the municipality. This policy was approved without modification by the Minister in 2018 and is essentially unchanged here.

Part 2. COMMENTS ABOUT SPECIFIC MAPS

General Notes on map-specific comments, to avoid repetition:

- Unless otherwise noted, all features removed from previous versions of the maps are endangered species habitat identified as sensitive, and the consultant report advised not showing ESA on the schedules. Now that we are breaking down the core areas into different features it is very important to respect data sensitivity.
- Linkages are mapped where there are core areas currently identified
- There are several suggestions that a particular wetland should be a core area because it 'would be a PSW' if evaluated – I don't think we are able to presume this without an evaluation in place. All wetlands will continue to have protections under Schedule D mapping and the text policies.
- All wetland mapping is based on Land Information Ontario wetland features; as per previous comments I do not think provincial guidance supports delineating or adjusting wetland boundaries without an evaluation and/or their approval

General

In my comments below, I have identified Candidate ANSIs that should be shown if there is not already a feature, area or linkage mapped, or if the values in the ANSI are not already identified somehow.

Comments on the individual maps

This big map is substantially better than the previous versions, and the switch to having the mapping be feature- and area-based rather than showing general core polygons is also a big improvement.

Tehkummah

The large wetland between the Manitou River and Blue Jay Creek should be mapped as it is a large, continuous coastal wetland system. Currently only a narrow strip of it right at the beach is mapped. (See attached .png file.) This wetland is also missing from the Schedule D7 Plan map. This is probably due to the low accuracy of the provincial wetlands layer which couldn't tell this area is wetland.

Blue Jay Creek and its headwater wetland, and Black Creek and its headwater wetland should be shown as linkages. These two wetlands are so large, they probably should be considered features simply for their sheer size in the landscape. If these were evaluated they would certainly be PSWs. The system is really too big to be ignored.

The system is also recognized as a candidate ANSI. The boundary includes the wetland, and Blue Jay Creek, Black Creek and their headwaters. This large, connected wetland system could be mapped as a coastal wetland in your system as it seems to meet your criteria.

Other wetlands should be shown especially the huge wetland along Rogers Creek (partly in Assiginack; again would certainly rank PSW for complexity, species diversity, SAR, etc.). Only a tiny piece of this vast system is shown, and it seems arbitrarily cut off to show wetland on only one side of the creek as if the creek were somehow a barrier rather than a connection. This makes no sense in a wetland.

Gordon-Barrie Island

In previous version, the large wetland on the north side of Ice Lake was shown. It needs to be put back in. It is linked to the wetlands on the 10th Line (Blanding's Turtles travel between these wetlands).

I believe the road is called the 10th Line (because it's a concession) rather than 10th Side Road. The name needs to be corrected.

I have seen/heard both names and the signs simply call it "the Tenth". Not sure which is correct.

Coastal wetland in Lake Wolsey extends farther south beyond the fish habitat polygon, to at least the Glen Road.

The inland wetland north of Lake Wolsey should be shown. It is continuous with the coastal wetland—this is one big red maple swamp with interconnected hydrology. (Yes, the 4th line goes through east-west, but there are culverts under the road, and the ditches contain wetland vegetation. The reason the provincial wetland layer didn't pick up on this being wetland is that it looks like some of the land connecting these wetlands

was cleared. It was cleared, but the land was too wet to use. (You can see the water in the trenches that were dug.) It is not a place where someone should put a building.

In review of this, and considering the wetland north of 4th line drains into the coastal wetland, we should consider mapping this as part of the same feature.

The earlier version map of this township showed

Linkage is needed between Ice Lake and Tobacco Lake. If you show the OWs there (and look at the imagery), you'll see this is a corridor. Linkage is also needed between Tobacco Lake and Nameless Lake. This is a deer and wildlife movement area.

My comments in the general section at the beginning apply to many places in this township. I'm glad to see inland wetlands mapped (south of Janet Head; East Bluff; etc.), but I question their linkages to the coast, which has no coastal wetland on the shore and a steep escarpment and no major creek. There likely is a deer path up the escarpment somewhere, but probably not there. I also question the linkage from the 10th Line wetlands running through town to the bay. I looked last year at the possibility of whether there was a linkage there for turtles and concluded the wetlands were not connected and that the streets and escarpment are significant barriers. I think they would be for deer as well.

Clearly these are important wetlands that do need to be shown, but not because they are coastal wetlands.

The stream here as mentioned previously is ephemeral/seasonal...when in that area in the early spring, I have noted there is substantial running water along flowing from the wetland area west and down through Gore Bay.

On the southeastern part of Barrie Island, between Sturgeon Bay and Greenman Rd the coastal wetlands are actually alvars (again low accuracy in the provincial layer). I have field work there from 1998. There is a candidate ANSI there to recognize that there are a number of alvars in the area. The ANSI boundary is very general, but mapping at least a centroid dot would serve as a head's up that unmapped alvar (incorrectly mapped wetland) is present.

Reviewing these features on the aerial photo, it may be they are both Alvar and wetland as they appear at least partially inundated in both 2016 and 2021.

Alvars at the northwestern part of Barrie Island at the western end of North Line are missing. They are incorrectly shown as OWs in the Plan's D schedule mapping. Again I have field work from there and can provide data.

NHIC data shows no alvar in that area, except where identified by the EIS undertaken on the subdivision near there. If we receive study information RE alvar we can add the feature to the NHS.

Candidate ANSIs:

East Bluff Talus. There is a candidate ANSI here that should be represented. Boundary there was fairly tightly mapped.

The boundary roughly follows the top of the escarpment and down to the shoreline. From reviewing the information in the Gap Analysis, it does not appear to have species at risk identified

Central Manitoulin

Manitou River corridor from Lake Manitou (at Sandfield) to Lake Huron (in Tehkummah) should be a linkage.

There is fish habitat along much of the Manitou river but the mapping layers make it difficult to see – we should tweak the mapping to make this more visible if possible.

Timber Bay Creek and Dewar's Creek (to the west) should be linkages.

There are linkages, coastal wetlands and fish habitat in this area.

Why were the core polygons at Timber Bay and Carter Bay deleted? They should be brown for known significant wildlife habitat. Carter Bay is also a candidate ANSI.

See general notes above.

The wetlands and creek that run from Mud Lake to Marsh Lake (in Mills) should be mapped as a linkage. Area along Scott's Creek should be a linkage.

At Dominion Bay, the spelling of the east-west name of White Church Road needs to be fixed.

Will Correct

Candidate ANSIs:

Carter Bay. The ANSI boundary treats it as a complex of interconnected ecosystems. Some indication of this ANSI should be mapped to allow the MPB to be able to check whether an application is within the system that has the core values.

The area corresponding to the site in the gap analysis is already designated as endangered species habitat (from NHIC) on our screening map.

Dominion Bay Beach Ridges

ANSI boundary is very vague, but the alvars identified in this ANSI are not shown on the NHS map. Some indication of this ANSI needs to be mapped so sites can be checked prior to further development.

I have no NHIC alvar in this area. The ANSI mapping does not specifically delineate the alvars though the text describes them "flank[ing] the raised beach system on the east and west". Endangered species habitat is identified in this area.

Billings

On Clapperton, the massive alvars on the northern half of the island are missing. These are mapped in the 2000 Ontario Alvar Theme Study and should have been digitized by NHIC. Seems odd to show the coastal wetlands there but not the alvars. Alvars are missing on Spillsbury Island as well.

In review of this area, some alvar from NHIC are missing on the schedule in the crown land-owned area. This should be corrected

Burpee-Mills

Alvars and dune shoreline are missing on the east side of Murphy Harbour. See attached .png file.

I do not see this in the NHIC mapping.

The alvars around Marsh Lake should be mapped. I have field work from this area from 2002, which should have been digitized by NHIC. See attached .png

Looking at my NHIC mapping (both from 2012 provided by MNRF and from this year from NHIC) I don't see any reference to alvar in the area (though I see references to other work by you throughout).

Alvars north of Shrigley Bay are not shown (they are similar to those north of Macs Bay). I have field work from this area from 2006, which should have been digitized by NHIC.

I do have NHIC alvar data there and it appears on my screening map, but does not draw correctly on the schedule. This should be corrected

Shrigley Creek (flows into Shrigley Bay) should have linkage that connects with Scott's Creek (farther north than you have it) which connects to the large wetlands on Union Road (in Central Manitoulin). Shrigley Bay – Marsh Lake is a candidate ANSI, but no boundary was mapped. Your mapping seems to identify the ANSI values—but the alvars are needed.

Other wetlands:

Wetland north of western Portage Bay is a beach ridge-fen complex with relict (inland) dunes. The whole area is recognized as a candidate ANSI, but no boundary was mapped. It should be noted on the map as a centroid. This wetland complex should be shown—if nothing else then as a linkage (more than just a line) between Portage Bay and Portage Lake.

Assiginack

Francis Brook should be shown as a linkage connecting the extensive Turtle Lake wetlands to the ravine below High Falls, which should also be linkage. High Falls should be shown as open space. Turtle Lake is a candidate ANSI with very unusual vegetation and floating peat mats. It should be mapped—as it was in the earlier map version.

The only features removed from the mapping schedules was endangered species habitat.

Maclean'S Road needs to have lower case S.

Will correct.

Dawson and Robinson

The Beaver Meadow lake/wetland complex would certainly be a PSW if evaluated. It should be a feature with linkage to Silver Lake.

See general comments.

West of the point on the west side of Fisher Bay there are bands of core and bands of linkage. Is this to connect separate alvars? It should all be alvar (some of it is treed alvar vegetation types). There's no point really in trying to split alvar types between feature and linkage. See attached .png file.

Alvar features are from NHIC/Provincial mapping and I have not amended them. Linkages are there to prevent landscape fragmentation.

Alvars on east side of Carroll Wood Bay are missing. See attached .png

There are Alvars here in NHIC but the boundaries are different. It is difficult to compare my mapping with the attached image - no scale indication and different aerial photo.

Spelling of Carroll Wood needs to be corrected. (See Wikipedia if you don't know who he was.)

Will Correct

Silverwater should be Silver Water.

Will Correct

Hog Lake-Maple Lake-Vidal Creek complex is a huge lake/wetland and linkage system that should be shown. It is all interconnected and connected to the coast via the creek.

A portion of the wetlands on Maple Lake are captured as coastal wetland. It may be that the wetlands on Maple Lake/Hog Lake would count as part of the same complex but I am not sure how that would be defined outside an evaluation.

Linkages to those little tiny wetlands in the mid-slope of the escarpment on the east side of Meldrum Bay seem a little hard to believe (similar to the ones at Janet Head). I'd keep the wetlands and skip the linkages.

This linkage follows an identified watercourse.

Young Lake-Wickett Lake-Falls Lake is also a connected system with linkages between the lakes.

Some Wetlands in Falls Lake and Wickett Lake meet criteria for Coastal Wetlands but were missed – these should be added along with linkages between them and to the coast.

Cockburn Island

The proposed conservation reserve should be shown, to be consistent with the proposed provincial park shown in Billings. Also this is useful information.

This was on previous versions but not on large schedule – should be added back in for clarity, though it is not part of the system.

There is true coastal wetland (on the coast) behind the dunes at Doc Hewson Bay.

LIO mapping does not show a wetland in this area, and I do not have COOP imagery in that area. However there are other coastal wetlands in the vicinity.

From: Jake [jaked@manitoulinplanning.ca]
Sent: January 16, 2023 4:37 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: 'Theresa Carlisle'
Subject: Natural Heritage System - Comments
Attachments: Bob Barnett - Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy - Comments.pdf

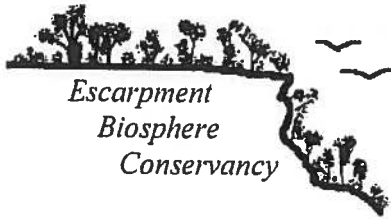
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hello Mr. Barnett,

Further to your comments regarding the Manitoulin Natural Heritage System provided to us on November 19 2022, please find attached my replies regarding the issues you raised.

Sincerely,

Jake Diebolt
GIS Technician
Manitoulin Planning Board
Email: jaked@manitoulinplanning.ca
Phone: 705-282-2237



Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy
Protecting the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve
 503 Davenport Road. Toronto Ontario Canada M4V 1B8

November 19, 2022

Manitoulin Planning Board

Re: Manitoulin Official Plan
 Natural Heritage Mapping

Concerns of EBC

Overview: Manitoulin is geologically and biologically similar to Grey and Bruce Counties whose plan mapping is far more extensive than that suggested in the Manitoulin draft. I understand that official plans for northern Ontario have different minimum requirements, but the land and species we are logically charged to protect is the same. The time for comment has not been sufficient and “zoom” access to the meeting is not available for interested parties with a long distance to travel or who are worried about COVID in a public space. The plan review time needs to be dramatically extended to include comments and improvements like those below:

I have reviewed the comments presented below, and include my own comments in red. -Jake Diebolt, GIS Technician, Manitoulin Planning Board, January 16 2023

1. Lack of protection and mapping for the Niagara Escarpment. The Escarpment has been designated as one of Ontario’s Geological and Tourism highlights. There is very little represented on the maps. EBC provided to MPB the mapping by an expert when the OP was under discussion. We have represented areas which should be protected on our own internal mapping. All of this is available.

I reviewed the submitted mapping of the escarpment from EBC (Escarpment Natural Area) during the approval process for the Official Plan. The Provincial Policy Statement 2020 does not require escarpment to be included as an NHS core area. Escarpment Lands are however identified on Schedule E and development/site alteration within 60 m of the base or brow of the escarpment is heavily restricted and requires an impact study before proceeding.

2. Earth science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) mapping including alvars and karsts has not been provided, although here are many, many areas worthy of representation. The municipalities and region are responsible for mapping “regional” ANSIs. Alvars of Ontario, published by Ontario Nature provides considerable info on such alvars, but a more complete inventory is required. At the very least, those areas should be

protected.

There are no Earth Science ANSIs designated on Manitoulin. There are large amounts of Alvar shown as core areas – 2860 hectares, with linkages created between them to prevent excessive landscape fragmentation. I do not have access to the entire text of Alvars of Ontario, but the excerpts I have seen do not cover all the alvar mapped by NHIC. The NHIC mapping we use shows alvars in each of the sites mentioned in the excerpts of Alvars of Ontario I have reviewed, in addition to many other areas. To my knowledge, there is no requirement (or authority) for municipalities or planning boards to map 'Regional ANSIs' under provincial policy.

3. Life Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) mapping has not been provided, although there are many, many areas worthy of representation. The municipalities and region are responsible for mapping "regional" ANSIs. This should include many of Manitoulin's grassland savannahs for example.

There are no Life Science ANSIs designated in our Planning Area. To my knowledge, there is no requirement (or authority) for municipalities or planning boards to map 'Regional ANSIs' under provincial policy.

4. The MNR did a gap analysis to identify potential ANSI sites, but never completed the work. There is information available to the Board on these sites which should be included as regional ANSIs.

I have reviewed the Gap Analysis as provided to this office. Briefly, the mapping is very general in nature and the work required to more accurately catalog and delineate potential features was for the most part never completed by the Province. However, in many cases, NHS Core Areas are mapped within the areas designated in the Gap Analysis report, using mapping from the province, NHIC, and EIS we have on file.

Completing the necessary work to designate these sites as ANSIs is not within the scope of the Natural Heritage System. To reiterate, I do not believe a requirement or authority exists to designate 'Regional ANSIs.'

5. EBC lands and that of Nature Conservancy should be represented on the map and designated at least as "open space".

As it is not required under provincial policy, the Board is not including Open Space in the system at this time.

6. Significant Woodlands are required to be mapped under the Provincial Policy Statements (PPS). A great deal of Manitoulin should qualify, but this mapping is not provided.

Significant Woodlands are *not* required to be mapped on Islands in Lake Huron. (PPS 2020 section 2.1.5-b)

7. Significant Valleylands are required to be mapped under the Provincial Policy Statements. A great deal of Manitoulin should qualify, but this mapping is not provided.

Significant Valleylands are *not* required to be mapped on Islands in Lake Huron. (PPS 2020 section 2.1.5-c)

8. Manitoulin is included within Ontario Lands for Life as a signature site to protect its land and shoreline in particular from excessive development. This relevant area should be shown clearly. The shoreline must be protected from storms and surges by rules setting back development by the correct number of metres from the high water mark.

Ontario Lands for Life was a guidance document for the provincial government when identifying new provincial protected areas. It is difficult to find this document, online or otherwise, and it is not clear to me if it is even still in effect. It is not a provincial policy document under the Planning Act.

9. Manitoulin has no conservation authority. The 100-year flood plain must be clearly mapped and such areas set aside from development. There are many wetlands on Manitoulin of importance. Virtually none are shown as protected areas.

Schedule E of the Official Plan indicates the 100 year flood contour identified on the Lake Huron shoreline. To my knowledge, flood plain data for the inland lakes and watercourses is not available, and mapping these areas is not within the scope of the Natural Heritage System. All wetlands on Manitoulin are subject to the protections under policies in section D of the Official Plan, and 838 wetlands covering 9761 hectares are identified on Schedule D. Additionally, the proposed schedule F identifies 375 coastal wetlands as core areas covering 3179 hectares, along with associated linkages.

10. Considerable information is available from Ontario's Natural Heritage Information Centre. Species of importance should be protected under the PPS by designating the relevant areas with appropriate designation. Such areas could contribute to regional ANSI designations.

The Natural Heritage Information Centre information was used to map the Alvar communities for the core areas of the NHS. In addition, NHIC data is routinely used to screen for endangered species during Planning applications. We have not shown NHIC endangered species habitat on the schedules due to data sensitivity issues, at the

recommendation of our consultant North-South Environmental.

11. Examples: Carter Bay is not shown as having any natural heritage status. It is extremely significant.

Carter Bay area has a large number of Natural Heritage Features and many of these are shown on Schedule D, with the exception of Endangered Species habitat which is sensitive. Several areas in the Carter Bay area are mapped as Core Areas in the draft Schedule F. There is extensive endangered species habitat mapping which is not shown on the schedule in that area due to data sensitivity.

12. EBC would be pleased to participate in a group designated to improve the quality of the present mapping. There are experts available who could make considerable contributions to the above noted problems with the mapping.

The Official Plan was approved by MMAH in 2018, and we began the process of building the NHS in 2019, had a public information session in August of 2019, a second public information session presenting draft mapping and policy in November of 2021, and are now having a public meeting in 2022. It is very late in the process to form a working group. The provincial ministries, as part of its approval process of the OPA, may consult with the EBC or any other person, organization or public body it feels would be beneficial.

Robert Barnett
Executive Director

Theresa Carlisle

From: Theresa Carlisle [mpbcarlisle@bellnet.ca]
Sent: January 16, 2023 2:21 PM
To: 'Saul Bomberry'
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Notice

Good afternoon Mr. Bomberry,

Happy New Year!

I am preparing for our next Planning Board Meeting. Tentatively, it will be held in person, here at the Planning Board Office on Tuesday, January 31st, 2023.

If you have any additional comments in regards to our NHSS draft mapping and draft text, would be please provide them before next Monday, January 23rd, 2023 to include with our Board agenda, if possible.
 Thank you.

From: Theresa Carlisle [mailto:mpbcarlisle@bellnet.ca]
Sent: November 22, 2022 2:23 PM
To: 'Saul Bomberry'
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Notice

Good afternoon Mr. Bomberry,

Thank you for providing us with these (additional) comments.

From: Saul Bomberry [mailto:sbomberry@uccmm.ca]
Sent: November 22, 2022 1:55 PM
To: Theresa Carlisle
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Notice

Hello Ms. Carlisle,

Here are UCCMM's comments:

- We do not believe that the process the MPB has followed in developing this plan is consistent with the requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, the current Official Plan, of the duty to consult and accommodate.
 - Specifically, the Official Plan requirement under D4(a):
 - "The Planning Board will work co-operatively with interested Indigenous communities to help inform the delineation of the Natural Heritage System....
 - "In this regard, the Planning Board and member municipalities will work collaboratively with the Indigenous communities regarding the inclusion of traditional knowledge in the establishment of the Natural Heritage System."

- While UCCMM did receive a notice of a public meeting last year, very little detail was provided. Given the requirements of the OP and the duty to consult and accommodate, simple notice of a public meeting is not collaboration and not consistent with the clear intent of the OP. In addition, it is difficult for UCCMM First Nations to meaningfully comment on the technical aspects of this without capacity funding. At a bare minimum the designation of specific areas as wildlife or fish habitat would take time and resources to engage with land users in the First Nations in order to properly assess impacts on the rights of the First Nations.
- This larger process concern is reflected in the substance of the draft policy which makes no mention of the importance of First Nations' rights and land use of wildlife and fish.
- It is not consistent with the OP and existing obligations to fail to have a dedicated and robust process with the First Nations to develop the draft policy, especially where there is no technical capacity funding provided.

Saul Bomberry, C.Tech.
Lands and Resources Manager
United Chiefs & Councils of Mnídoo Mnísing

P.O. Box 275, 1110 Hwy 551
M'Chigeeng, Ontario, P0P 1G0

[REDACTED]

Fax. [REDACTED]

Cell [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On Sat, Nov 19, 2022 at 4:58 PM Theresa Carlisle <mpbcarlisle@bellnet.ca> wrote:

Hello Mr. Bomberry,

The Public Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 22nd, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. as scheduled.

If possible, could you provide us with any additional comments or concerns before then?

From: Saul Bomberry [mailto:[\[REDACTED\]](mailto:[REDACTED])]
Sent: November 17, 2022 11:32 AM
To: Theresa Carlisle
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Notice

Hi Theresa,

We're going to need more time to assess this issue and comment.

At least another 30 days from close.

Thank you,

Saul Bomberry, C.Tech.

Lands and Resources Manager

United Chiefs & Councils of Mnidoo Mnising

On Tue, Nov 1, 2022 at 3:43 PM Theresa Carlisle <mpbcarlisle@bellnet.ca> wrote:

Good afternoon,

A Public Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 22nd, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. to consider the implementation of an Area-Wide Natural Heritage System Strategy (NHSS) for the District of Manitoulin.

Please find attached the "Notice of Public Meeting".

Additional information including the 'draft' text and 'draft' mapping (schedules) are available on the Planning Board website www.manitoulinplanning.ca

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Office.

Theresa

Theresa Carlisle,

Secretary Treasurer

Manitoulin Planning Board

Theresa Carlisle

From: Theresa Carlisle [mpbcarlisle@bellnet.ca]
Sent: January 30, 2023 4:07 PM
To: 'Judith Jones'
Cc: 'Jake'
Subject: RE: NHS at the next MPB meeting

Tracking:	Recipient	Read
	'Judith Jones'	
	'Jake'	Read 2023-01-31 7:46 AM

Good afternoon Judith,

I acknowledge receipt of your email.

The Planning Board may adopt an Official Plan Amendment which will be presented as a draft document, at our Board Meeting tomorrow evening.

Planning Board staff will be recommending some of your requested changes, i.e. five coastal wetlands, the Alvars on Clapperton Island, and fish habitat on the Manitou River

The Board Agenda has already been sent out and one of our Board Members does not use email.

I will include your email submission to the Board tomorrow night, for their consideration of the draft Natural Heritage System Strategy (NHSS).

We look forward to keeping a good working relationship during the next stages of the NHSS.

From: Judith Jones [mailto:winterspider@eastlink.ca]
Sent: January 27, 2023 10:08 PM
To: Theresa Carlisle
Subject: NHS at the next MPB meeting

Hi Theresa,

I've had a look at Jake's replies to my comments. Given the lack of willingness to make any changes, I don't think there is much point for me to come to the meeting.

Attached is my response to Jake's comments. I request that you forward this to the board or present it at the meeting. Thanks.

🌸 Judith Jones 🌸
Winter Spider Eco-Consulting
P.O. Box 278, Manitowaning, Ontario P0P 1N0
(705) 859-1027 <winterspider@eastlink.ca>

The Manitoulin Planning Board
By email

January 30, 2023

To the Manitoulin Planning Board members:

I know that you will again be considering the adoption of the Natural Heritage System Strategy at the next meeting on January 31, 2023. I am quite dismayed that there has been a complete rejection of my comments—even when they pertain to errors in the provincial mapping layers—and a complete rejection of my multiple offers to assist with checking the mapping for errors. I have a lifetime of experience with Manitoulin Island's natural features, and much of the data Jake got from the province comes from my fieldwork.

The point of the NHS is to allow the Planning Board and end users of the policy to consider the landscape as a whole during a development application. The current mapping serves neither to alert developers about landscape issues that might extend outside their property nor to inform people in the local community who may want to ensure those issues are adequately addressed. I continue to maintain that if the mapping were to show all of the natural features treated in the official plan at once, then one would be able to evaluate their connections. However, that is not possible without showing the Other Wetlands and the Escarpment, and providing the correct location of linkages and the correct interpretation of which wetlands are Coastal Wetlands.

Given the Planning Board's unwillingness to make any changes to the existing mapping, I will now forward my comments (submitted to you on November 18, 2022 and presented at your last meeting of November 22, 2022) to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

I continue to stand ready to work with you and your staff on this issue (or any other) any time you ask.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of two distinct scribbled areas. The first is a larger, more complex scribble on the left, and the second is a smaller, more linear scribble on the right.

Theresa Carlisle

From: Theresa Carlisle [mpbcarlisle@bellnet.ca]
Sent: January 19, 2023 4:22 PM
To: 'Judith Jones'
Cc: 'Jake'
Subject: RE: a small comment

Tracking:	Recipient	Read
	'Judith Jones'	
	'Jake'	Read 2023-01-20 8 23 AM

Good afternoon Judith,

Thank you for your email.

I agree that we are all working toward the same goal. We need to start somewhere and I truly believe we have made a Great start and have produced a Great (draft) NHSS. A good working relationship among all of us is very important.

The NHSS is at a stage where the Planning Board staff are ready to recommend to the Board to adopt an Official Plan Amendment and forward it to the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) together with our (draft) NHSS and mapping. This is a requirement from MMAH when our Official Plan document was approved in October 2018. If the Planning Board supports our recommendation, this is the first step.

Keeping that in mind, MMAH will consult with the partner Ministries and there may very well be modifications. We will see what develops.

Moving forward; from time to time with new information that is received, the NHSS can and will be amended, i.e. from planning applications, EIS reports, local knowledge, site visit, etc.

The newspaper article was a bit of a surprise to me too.

We would appreciate any comments you may have to include with the Board Notice, that will be going out Monday or Tuesday next week.
Thank you, Judith.

-----Original Message-----

From: Judith Jones [<mailto:winterspider@eastlink.ca>]
Sent: January 19, 2023 12:27 PM
To: Jake; Theresa Carlisle
Subject: a small comment

Hi Jake and Theresa,

I got Jake's message with his responses to my comments. I'm still thinking over how or whether to respond or if there are any next steps that make any sense on my end.

In the meantime, I just wanted to say that I had nothing to do with Tom Sasvari's article in this week's paper.

It wasn't great coverage either--for you or for me. He clearly did not understand the purpose of the exercise, judging by all the downloaded text at the end of the article.

I really do want to keep a good working relationship with you both and the MPB. In my view we are all working for the same goal but with different roles and different views of how to get there. It is not at all my intent to be as adversarial as I am portrayed in the write-up, and I hope you didn't take it that way.

I think the biggest concern for all of us is how Bill 23 will affect future applications. I really hope the new NHS--in whatever form it turns out--will still be applicable. It would be a real shame if all of our work for all this time was wasted.

Best regards,

Judith

Judith Jones
Winter Spider Eco-Consulting
P.O. Box 278
Manitowaning, ON P0P 1N0
(705) 859-1027
(416) 268-0993 cell
winterspider@eastlink.ca



MANITOULIN PLANNING BOARD

40 WATER STREET - UNIT 1 - P.O. BOX 240 - GORE BAY - ONTARIO - P0P 1H0
☎ 705-282-2237 📠 705-282-3142

THE MANITOULIN PLANNING BOARD

BY-LAW NO. 2023- 002

Being a By-law to adopt an Official Plan Amendment for the
Manitoulin Planning Area including the
Unincorporated Townships of Robinson and Dawson

WHEREAS the Manitoulin Planning Board has recommended the adoption and submission of an Official Plan Amendment for the implementation of a Natural Heritage System Strategy for the Manitoulin Planning Area;

AND WHEREAS the Manitoulin Planning Board deems it appropriate to adopt the Official Plan Amendment for the implementation of a Natural Heritage System Strategy for the Manitoulin Planning Area;

NOW THEREFORE, the Manitoulin Planning Board, under Section 18 of the Planning Act, as amended, hereby enacts as follows:

1. THAT Official Plan Amendment No. A-3 to the Official Plan for the District of Manitoulin consisting of the attached explanatory text and Schedule F is hereby adopted.
2. THAT Official Plan Amendment No. A-3 to the Official Plan for the District of Manitoulin, consisting of the attached explanatory text and Schedule F, is attached hereto and forms part of this By-law.
3. THAT this By-law shall come into force and take effect on the day of the final passing thereof subject to the requirements of the Planning Act.

READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME, AND FINALLY PASSED, THIS 31st DAY OF JANUARY 2023.

L. Hayden, Chair

T. Carlisle, Secretary-Treasurer

AMENDMENT NO. A-3

TO THE

OFFICIAL PLAN

FOR THE

DISTRICT OF MANITOULIN

AMENDMENT NO. A-3
TO THE
OFFICIAL PLAN
FOR THE
DISTRICT OF MANITOULIN

The attached explanatory text and Schedule F constitutes Amendment No. A-3 to the Official Plan for the District of Manitoulin.

The following amendment to the Official Plan for the District of Manitoulin consists of two parts:

- PART A** **THE PREAMBLE** – consists of the purpose, location, and basis for the amendment and does not constitute part of the actual Amendment.
- PART B** **THE AMENDMENT** – including the text and Schedule F, sets out the actual Amendment.

PART A THE PREAMBLE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Amendment is to implement a Natural Heritage System Strategy for the District of Manitoulin, as required by Modification No. 21 of the Official Plan for the District of Manitoulin as approved on October 29, 2018.

2. Location

The area affected by the Amendment constitutes all lands in the geographic Townships of Allan, Assiginack, Barrie Island, Burpee, Campbell, Carnarvon, Dawson, Gordon, Mills, Robinson, Sandfield, and Tehkummah; the Town of Gore Bay; and those portions of the Township of Sheguiandah and Bidwell that are within the Municipal boundaries of the Municipality of Assiginack.

For greater clarity, said lands being the area falling within the municipal boundaries of the Municipalities of Assiginack, Billings, Burpee-Mills, Central Manitoulin, Cockburn Island, Gordon/Barrie Island, and Tehkummah; the Town of Gore Bay; and the unincorporated areas of Robinson and Dawson.

3. Basis

The current Official Plan for the Manitoulin District was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on October 29, 2018. At that time, the Official Plan, by Modification No. 21, required that within three years the Manitoulin Planning Board update the Official Plan to include a Natural Heritage System Strategy in order to conform to Section 2.1.3 of the Provincial Policy Statement.

The Manitoulin Planning Board proposes to implement the Natural Heritage System Strategy into the Official Plan by replacing Section D-4(a) and D-4(b) of the Official Plan with updated text outlining the policies and components for the Natural Heritage System, and to add a new Schedule F to the Official Plan illustrating the components of the system (i.e. the Core Areas and Linkages). No amendments to Schedule D and Schedules D1 through D8 of the Official Plan are proposed.

PART B THE AMENDMENT

All of this part of the document entitled Part B the Amendment, which consists of the following text and attached Schedule F, constitutes Amendment No. A-3 to the Official Plan for the District of Manitoulin.

DETAILS OF THE AMENDMENT

The Official Plan is amended as follows:

- a) Schedule F to this Amendment is hereby added to the Official Plan as Schedule F – Natural Heritage System.
- b) Section D.4(a), D.4(b), D.4.1, D.4.2, D.4.3, D.4.4, D.4.5, and D.4.6 are hereby removed and replaced by the text attached, which will become Section D.4(a) and D.4(b).

D.4(a) Natural Heritage System Strategy

A natural heritage system is an ecologically based delineation of nature and natural function – a system of connected or to be connected green and natural areas that provide ecological functions over a longer period of time and enable movement of species. Natural heritage systems encompass or incorporate natural features, functions and linkages (also referred to as “corridors”) as component parts within them and across the landscape. They also enable the linking of different landscapes.

A natural heritage system informs and supports land use planning and resource management while providing a strategic focus for restoration, stewardship, securement and the conservation of biodiversity. It also serves to:

- Limit landscape fragmentation;
- Mitigate the effects of climate change by facilitating migrations to more suitable habitats;
- Facilitate the maintenance of ecosystem health resilience and enjoyment / use by humans; and
- Provide ecosystem services such as clean air, flood attenuation, erosion prevention, and productive soils

The following Natural Heritage Features and Areas will make up the Natural Heritage System:

- Provincially Significant Wetlands
- Coastal Wetlands, including Significant Coastal Wetlands
- Significant Wildlife Habitat
- Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (A.N.S.I)
- Fish Habitat
- Habitat of Endangered and Threatened Species
- Alvars
- Linkages

Natural Heritage Features and Areas shall be protected for the long term. The significant Natural Heritage Features and Areas are lands that represent the legacy of the natural landscape of the area and as a result have important environmental and social value. Natural Heritage Features and Areas in the District have been identified on Schedule D. Natural Heritage Features and Areas that make up the Natural Heritage System have been identified on Schedule F, except where data sensitivity or other issues prevent their display. Features meeting the requirements of the Natural Heritage System constitute part of the system regardless of whether they appear on Schedule F. The Planning Board and the municipalities will work to conserve, restore and enhance them, wherever possible.

The following policies apply to Natural Heritage Features and Areas and the Natural Heritage System:

1. Natural Heritage Features and Areas have been identified and mapped to the extent possible and are based on data from the Province and its partners as well as, in some cases, Environmental Impact Studies (EIS) undertaken during Planning Act applications. The accuracy of the feature limits is based on that of available data. The boundaries of the features and areas making up the Natural Heritage System may be refined, with additions, deletions and/or boundary adjustments, through individual EIS prepared in accordance with Section D.7 of this Official Plan or other similar studies as outlined in later sub-sections, and accepted by the Manitoulin Planning Board and/or the Municipalities. Once approved through an approval process under the Planning Act, these refinements will be in effect on the date of such approval. The Board will maintain mapping identifying such refinements and incorporate them as part of the Planning Area's statutory review of its Official Plan.
2. The Planning Board and the municipalities will encourage, wherever possible and appropriate, the enhancement and restoration of features and areas of the Natural Heritage System, including maintenance or re-naturalization of shoreline areas.
3. There may be features and areas on the landscape that are part of the Natural Heritage System but which are not mapped or cannot be readily mapped. Any feature or area that meets the criteria set out in Section D(4)(a) and Section D(4)(b) is part of the Natural Heritage system and is subject to the policies of the Official Plan.
4. The Planning Board and the municipalities will encourage, wherever possible and appropriate, that trees be planted to replace those trees removed if a development proceeds. The Planning Board and the municipalities will also encourage the conservation or replanting of roadside and fence-line shrubs and trees, and riparian area vegetation, wherever possible and appropriate in the context of new development. Financial compensation for tree loss is not considered as the preferable means of appropriate mitigation for development.
5. When considering development proposals, the Planning Board and the municipalities will encourage the exploration of opportunities for creating new habitats, natural vegetation regeneration, conserving natural landforms and functions for protecting and enhancing groundwater and surface water resources, and for promoting environmental education and interpretation.

6. Where components of Natural Heritage Features and Areas are held in private ownership, nothing in this Official Plan will require that these lands be free and available for public use, and the identification of land will not oblige the Planning Board, the municipalities, or other public agencies to purchase the land.
7. Subject to Provincial and Federal statutes, the policies of this Official Plan will not prevent the continuation of existing agricultural uses within or adjacent to Natural Heritage Features and Areas.
8. The Planning Board and the municipalities will, to the extent feasible, ensure that required maintenance of existing drains is carried out in a manner that mitigates impacts of the maintenance of drains on Natural Heritage Features, Areas, and their functions.
9. When considering applications or initiating projects under the *Drainage Act* or *Water Resources Act* for drainage works, the Planning Board and the municipalities, in consultation with the Province, will be satisfied that the works will be engineered and constructed to ensure no negative impact on Natural Heritage Features, Areas, and their functions. Such considerations may include completion of an EIS or an environmental evaluation/appraisal carried out under the *Drainage Act*.
10. The following policies will apply whenever a planning application proposes development and/or site alteration within a Natural Heritage Feature or Area that is part of the Natural Heritage System. More detailed policies for specific feature types are outlined in Section D.4(b).1 to D.4(b).6 of this Official Plan.
 - a. Development and Site Alteration will not be permitted in:
 - i. Provincially Significant Wetlands; and
 - ii. Provincially Significant Coastal Wetlands
 - b. Development and site alteration will not be permitted in:
 - i. Coastal Wetlands
 - ii. Other Wetlands
 - iii. Alvars
 - iv. Significant Wildlife Habitat
 - v. Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest; and
 - vi. Linkages

Unless it can be demonstrated through an EIS or equivalent study (as per Section D.7) that there will be no negative impact to the natural features or their ecological functions.

- c. Development and site alteration will not be permitted in:
 - i. Fish Habitat
 - ii. Habitat of Endangered or Threatened Species

Except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements, and supported by an EIS or equivalent study (as per Section D.7).

11. Development and site alteration in the *adjacent lands* of features identified in Section 10 above will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated through an EIS or equivalent study (as per Section D.7) that there will be no negative impact to the natural features or their ecological functions. The distances used to determine the adjacent lands of the features comprising the Natural Heritage System are set out in the chart below and based on the criteria of the Natural Heritage Reference Manual:

Feature or Area Type	Adjacent Lands Distance
Provincially Significant Wetlands	120 metres
Coastal Wetlands	120 metres
Alvars	120 metres
Significant Wildlife Habitat	120 metres
Areas of Natural or Scientific Interest (A.N.S.I.) – life science	120 metres
Areas of Natural or Scientific Interest (A.N.S.I.) – earth science	50 metres
Fish Habitat	120 metres, or 300 metres for a Lake Trout Lake that is designated an at-capacity lake.
Habitat of Endangered or Threatened Species	120 metres

12. If an EIS or equivalent study is required under preceding Section 10 or 11, it may be appropriately scoped or waived if the proposal meets certain criteria as laid out in the specific sub-sections for these features later in the Official Plan.

Section D.4(b) Feature-Specific Policies

In addition to the policies in Section D.4(a) regarding features and areas composing the Natural Heritage System, the following policies apply to specific features that may or may not form part of the Natural Heritage System.

D.4.(b).1 – Provincially Significant Wetlands

Existing Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW) in the District of Manitoulin will be protected. If any additional Provincially Significant Wetlands are identified during the life of this Official Plan, this Plan will be amended in accordance with Section F.2.1. The boundaries of PSWs will be defined based on information from the Province. The boundaries of PSWs may be refined without an amendment to this Plan provided approval is obtained from the Province. The addition or removal of a PSW will *not* require an amendment to this Plan.

D.4.(b).2 – Other Wetlands

The following policies apply to Other Wetlands:

1. Other Wetlands (OWs) are delineated on Schedule D, and include Unevaluated Wetlands, Coastal Wetlands, and Evaluated (Not Significant) Wetlands.
2. The boundaries of OWs will be defined based on information from the Province, which may be amended from time to time. Where new information becomes available, the Planning Board will review and update the policies related to unidentified wetlands as part of any subsequent review to this Official Plan.
3. The Planning Board may require that a Wetland Evaluation be prepared for any development or site alteration adjacent to an OW in accordance with the Province's Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES) for Southern Ontario, or other provincial guidance document as may be created or amended from time to time, to determine their status under policies of the Provincial Policy Statement and this Official Plan. Evaluations are to be accepted by the responsible Provincial Ministry. Where an evaluation is completed and an OW is determined to be Provincially Significant, the policies applicable to Provincially Significant Wetlands shall apply.
4. Wetlands may be subject to additional regulations or legislation. No policy of this Plan is intended to and does not imply waiving, permission or authorization of any kind.

D.4.(b).3 – Habitat of Endangered and Threatened Species

The following policies apply to Habitat of Endangered or Threatened Species:

1. Habitat of Endangered Species and Threatened Species will be defined based on the *Endangered Species Act (ESA)* and the Species at Risk in Ontario (SARO) list.
2. The Province is the responsible authority to approve the delineation of habitat of endangered and/or threatened species identified by an ecological site assessment or as part of an Environmental Impact Study (EIS).

3. In accordance with common practices to protect the associated features from disturbance, the Habitat of Endangered or Threatened Species are not illustrated on the schedules to this Official Plan. Instead, a screening map, prepared by the Province showing areas of potential habitat of endangered and/or threatened species has been provided to the Planning Board for reference, which may be updated from time to time. Where the screening map identifies the potential habitat of endangered and/or threatened species, an ecological site assessment (EcoSA) will be required in support of a planning application. The EcoSA will assess the potential for habitat and delineate the extent of habitat of endangered and/or threatened species within or adjacent to an area proposed for development or site alteration. In cases where an EIS is triggered by this Official Plan, the above requirements may be addressed as part of the EIS, provided it is undertaken by a qualified individual.

D.4.(b).4 - Fish Habitat

The following policies apply to Fish Habitat:

1. The Planning Board and the municipalities recognize that the health of the aquatic environment is a fundamental indicator of the health of the overall ecosystem in the District and beyond. The harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat is prohibited under the *Fisheries Act*.
2. Through a fish habitat mitigation/compensation assessment, in consultation with the Planning Board and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), it is the Planning Board's objective to secure a "no net loss" of productive capacity of fish habitat, and where possible, secure a net gain of productive capacity of fish habitat.
3. Any development or change in land use within or adjacent to an existing fish habitat area, or potential fish habitat area along lands adjacent to any lake, river, stream, or wetland, will be reviewed by the Planning Board in consultation with the DFO with respect to the potential impact. Adjacent lands will be defined by the Planning Board, in consultation with the Province and DFO, and will generally be 30-120 metres from the edge of the identified Fish Habitat. Any such proposal may be subject to a scoped Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in accordance with Section D.7, to determine if proposed development will adversely impact the fish habitat. If it is determined that development will impact the fish habitat, development will not be permitted. If it is determined, through consultation with DFO, that development will not impact fish habitat then the requirement for an EIS may be waived, in accordance with Section D.7. An example of this may include development on full municipal services and nearby, intervening development between the site and the identified fish habitat.

4. Where it has been determined by the DFO that the development or change in land use will affect the natural functions of the fish habitat, the preparation of a fish habitat mitigation/compensation assessment will be required. The assessment will typically be required to include the following information:
 - a. identify the nature and extent of potential impacts;
 - b. determine appropriate mitigative measures to protect the affected fish habitat;
 - c. specify compensation for loss of fish habitat through near-site replacement of habitat, off-site replacement of fish habitat or an on-site increase of fish habitat capacity;
 - d. determine appropriate buffering and explain how such buffering will be protected in the future; and
 - e. address other matters as determined by the DFO.
5. Any requirements imposed through a fish habitat mitigation/compensation assessment will be implemented by the proponent with input from, and to the satisfaction of the Planning Board and the DFO.
6. Any development or site alteration within 20 metres above the high water mark will have regard to the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), which was developed by the Province.

D.4.(b).5 – Significant Wildlife Habitat

Significant wildlife habitats are ecologically important and includes species ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system. Significant wildlife habitat is an area where plants, animals and other organisms live and find adequate amounts of food, shelter, water and space needed to sustain their populations. All plants and animals have individual habitat requirements, which vary for different periods in their life cycles. Specific wildlife habitats of concern may include areas where species concentrate at a vulnerable point in their life cycle, and areas, which are important to migratory or non-migratory species. An example of this includes Deer Wintering Areas, which are identified on Schedule D to this Official Plan.

The following policies apply to Significant Wildlife Habitat:

1. Significant Wildlife Habitat is to be screened for and assessed in accordance with the Significant Wildlife Habitat Criteria Schedules for Ecoregion 6E (M.N.R.F. 2015) as may be amended from time to time.

2. Significant Wildlife Habitat is not mapped on Schedules to the Plan, with the exception of Deer Wintering Areas and areas of Significant Wildlife Habitat identified by an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) prepared during the course of a planning application.
3. A screening assessment for Significant Wildlife Habitat is to be completed to determine potential presence of this feature type in accordance with Section D.7 of the Official Plan.

D.4.(b)5.1 Deer Wintering Areas

The following policies apply to Deer Wintering Areas:

1. Deer populations provide a broad range of economic, social and cultural benefits to Manitoulin Island residents. These include both direct benefits (e.g. hunting, viewing, tourism) and indirect benefits (e.g. contributions to biodiversity, bequest to following generations). It is the intent of the Planning Board to conserve important Core Deer Yards as part of the natural ecology of Manitoulin. Core Deer Yard boundaries are shown on Schedule D of this Official Plan.
2. Core Deer Yards consist mainly of coniferous trees (pines, hemlock, cedar, spruce) with a conifer canopy closure of more than 60% and may include interspersed areas of deciduous forest. Core Deer Yards provide suitable areas of cover, food, and adjacent natural lands. Lands surrounding the Core Deer Yard can be agricultural, or mixed/deciduous forest; however, a Core Deer Yard is predominantly woodland habitat with minor components of cultural lands. These areas are traditionally used by deer and are absent of barriers to migration to and from the yard itself.
3. Development and site alteration can be beneficial when it maintains cover and provides winter browse. It can be detrimental when excessive amounts of conifer cover are removed or converted to mixed woods or hardwoods. The three most important features of a successful yard are traditional use, cover and browse.
4. Policies aim to be enabling and flexible to allow for local land use planning decisions to address local circumstances and needs, while still contributing to the broader landscape-based deer management needs.

5. In areas identified as a Core Deer Yard or on adjacent lands, shown on the land use Schedules to this Official Plan, and outside of the identified urban areas and village areas, new development or site alteration may be permitted without an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) provided:
 - a. The proposed new lots have a minimum 90 metre frontage and 90 metre depth, and vegetation retention is maximized through the use of tools such as a development agreement or a subdivision agreement, miscellaneous notification agreement (and subject to the other policies of this plan). Smaller lot sizes may be considered if through means of an EIS it can be demonstrated that no adverse impact will occur to the habitat or herd.
 - b. An EIS as set out in Section D-7 will be required for the creation of more than three new lots as a means to determine the extent of conifer habitat to be retained and other mitigation measures. A Township lot as originally surveyed, i.e. 40 hectare lot, may be severed from an entire holding without affecting the three lot limit in this case.
 - c. Where development is proposed in shoreline areas, coniferous fringe habitat along the shoreline (providing deer browse and shelter habitat) shall be conserved.
6. For development proposals within or adjacent to deer habitat, the Planning Board will require an applicant to provide the following:
 - a. a map or sketch indicating the property and the location of the deer habitat on or adjacent to the proposed development and identifying all adjacent land uses;
 - b. identify existing land use and proposed land use;
 - c. identify alternative development locations or forms considered;
 - d. describe the existing forest cover of the area including species, extent of existing forest types etc., including pictures and maps to assist in review of the application;
 - e. describe other identified natural heritage features or development constraints present on the site;
 - f. provide any previous habitat assessments or studies that exist;

- g. identify the potential impacts of the proposal on key ecological functions including loss of existing conifer cover, food production areas, and linkages;
 - h. describe how the identified deer wintering habitat will be protected or enhanced;
 - i. outline the proposed mitigation measures which will be employed to reduce potential impacts to the deer wintering area as a result of the proposed development; and
 - j. specify the net predicted effect of the development and proposed mitigation measures.
7. Where requested to be completed by Planning Board an EIS must be completed by a qualified professional, the cost of which will normally be borne by the applicant. The Planning Board may require a peer review of an EIS.
 8. An EIS may be required for a planning application, other than new lot creation, for a change in land use to a commercial, industrial, or institutional use where the proposed building coverage and clearing may result in negative impacts to the natural features and their ecological functions.
 9. An EIS will be required when a planning application is made for a large scale recreational use (e.g. a golf course, serviced campground, tourist lodge, motor sport track) that will require large scale site alteration, or large scale removal of the natural vegetation coverage.
 10. On existing lots of record, where planning approvals are not required and residential uses are permitted, new residential uses do not require the submission of an EIS.

D.4.(b).6 Alvars

Alvars are naturally open areas of thin or no soils over essentially flat limestone, dolostone, or marble rock, supporting a sparse vegetation cover of mostly shrubs and herbs. Alvars are shown on Schedule D and Schedule F. Policies regarding development and/or site alteration within or on the adjacent lands of Alvars are contained in Section D.4(a).10.

D.4.(b).7 Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)

ANSIs are areas of land and water containing natural landscapes or features, which have been identified as having values related to protection, appreciation, scientific study or education. These areas have been identified, mapped, and ranked by the Province. The boundaries of all known ANSIs have been shown on Schedule D. Changes to the boundaries of an ANSI require the approval of the Province.

D.4(b).8 Linkages

The Natural Heritage System intends to protect the ecological function of Natural Heritage Features and Areas by ensuring connectivity between identified features. This connectivity is meant to ensure that hydrological and ecological function is preserved, to allow the free movement of wildlife, and to limit landscape fragmentation.

The mapping of linkages on Schedule F is general in nature and is meant to recognize and highlight connectivity in the landscape. Linkages currently identified in the schedule include:

- Water courses connecting Coastal Wetlands to Lake Huron, to a distance of 50 metres from the bank of the stream;
- Water courses connecting areas of identified Fish Habitat, to a distance of 50 metres from the bank of the stream, or in the case of meandering streams, the line from which the adjacent lands would be measured as if the stream were designated Fish Habitat, as set out in the *Natural Heritage Reference Manual Second Edition (2010)*;
- Portions of shoreline and lake bed connecting nearby areas of Fish Habitat on a lake;
- Areas of natural cover between identified Alvars that occur within the Alvars' adjacent lands distance;
- Site Scale Linkages identified in an Environmental Impact Study (EIS)

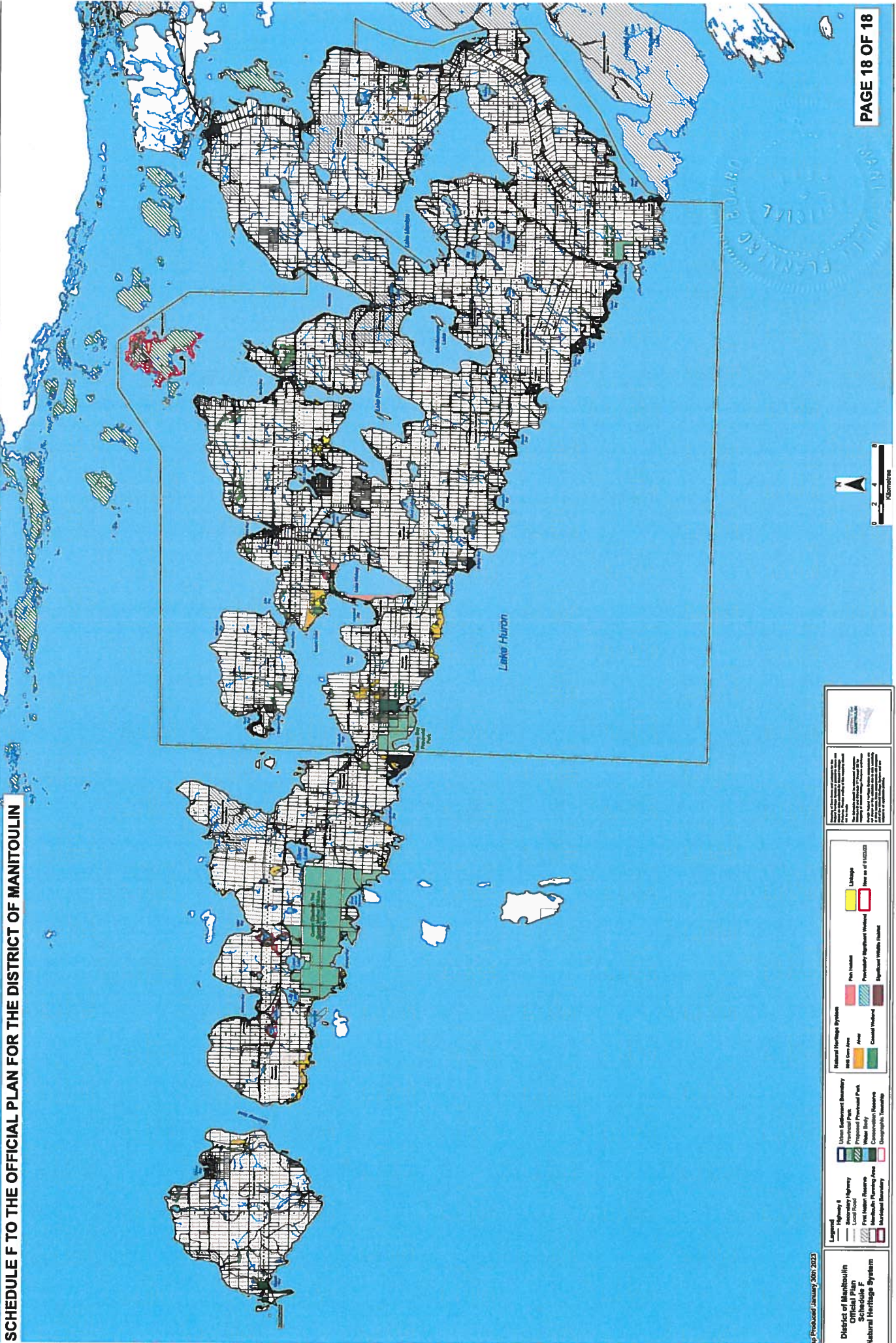
Smaller site-scale linkages are intended to provide connection within and between natural heritage features and areas in close proximity. Linkages at the site-level scale, as may be assessed and identified through a site specific study such as an EIS, do not appear on the attached Schedule F; however, the policies of this Official Plan continue to apply.

The following policies apply to Linkages in the Natural Heritage System:

1. The mapping of landscape-level Linkages uses the best currently available mapping of the features and areas that make up the NHS. Landscape level linkages will vary in size and shape depending on their habitat types and/or functions. This scale of mapping is general in nature and minor shifts may be permitted when informed by more detailed assessment.
2. Existing uses on lots of record within Linkages will be permitted to continue.
3. Development and Site Alteration for low-intensity uses may be permitted in linkages within this Official Plan if it can be demonstrated through an Ecological Site Assessment (EcoSA) that the development will have no negative impacts on the function of the Linkage, or that the development can be conducted in such a way as to avoid the Linkage altogether. In cases where an EIS is triggered by this assessment, the requirements of Section D.7 shall apply.

4. When considering waiving or scoping an EIS supporting a proposed development within a Linkage, the Planning Board will have consideration for the criteria applied to the Natural Heritage Features for which the Linkage is providing connectivity, and for the nature of the land uses proposed.
5. Smaller site-scale linkages are intended to provide connection within and between natural heritage features and areas in close proximity. Linkages at the site-level scale, as may be assessed and identified through a site specific study such as an EIS, may not appear on Schedule F; however, the policies of this Official Plan continue to apply.
6. Development and Site Alteration within site-scale linkages will not be permitted except for portions of naturalized stormwater management facilities or similar infrastructure that does not disrupt the function of the Linkage.

SCHEDULE F TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN FOR THE DISTRICT OF MANITOULIN



as Amended January 30th, 2023

**District of Manitoulin
Official Plan
Schedule F
Natural Heritage System**

Legend

Highway 6	Urban Settlement Boundary	Natural Heritage System	Linkage
County Highway	Provincial Park	Wild Core Area	Other
Primary Resource	Wilderness Provincial Park	Other	Provincially Significant Wetland
Manitoulin Planning Area	Conservation Reserve	Coastal Waters	Important Wetlands
Municipal Boundary	Designated Township		

Map of the District of Manitoulin showing the Natural Heritage System. The map is based on the District of Manitoulin Official Plan, Schedule F, Natural Heritage System, as amended January 30th, 2023. The map is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a legal document. The District of Manitoulin is not responsible for any errors or omissions on this map. The map is subject to change without notice.