

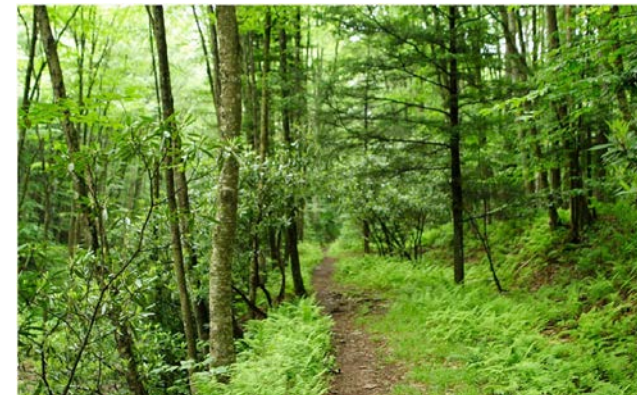
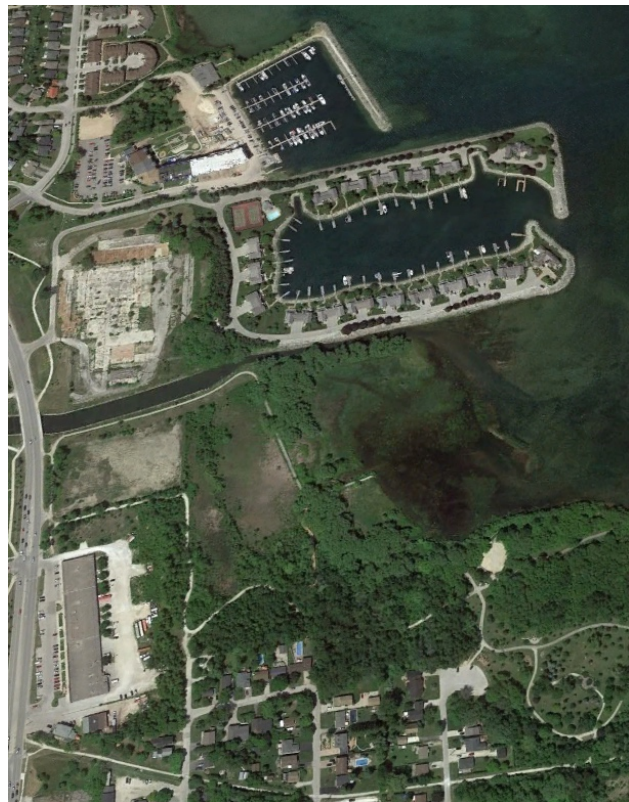


COUNTY OF SIMCOE

MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

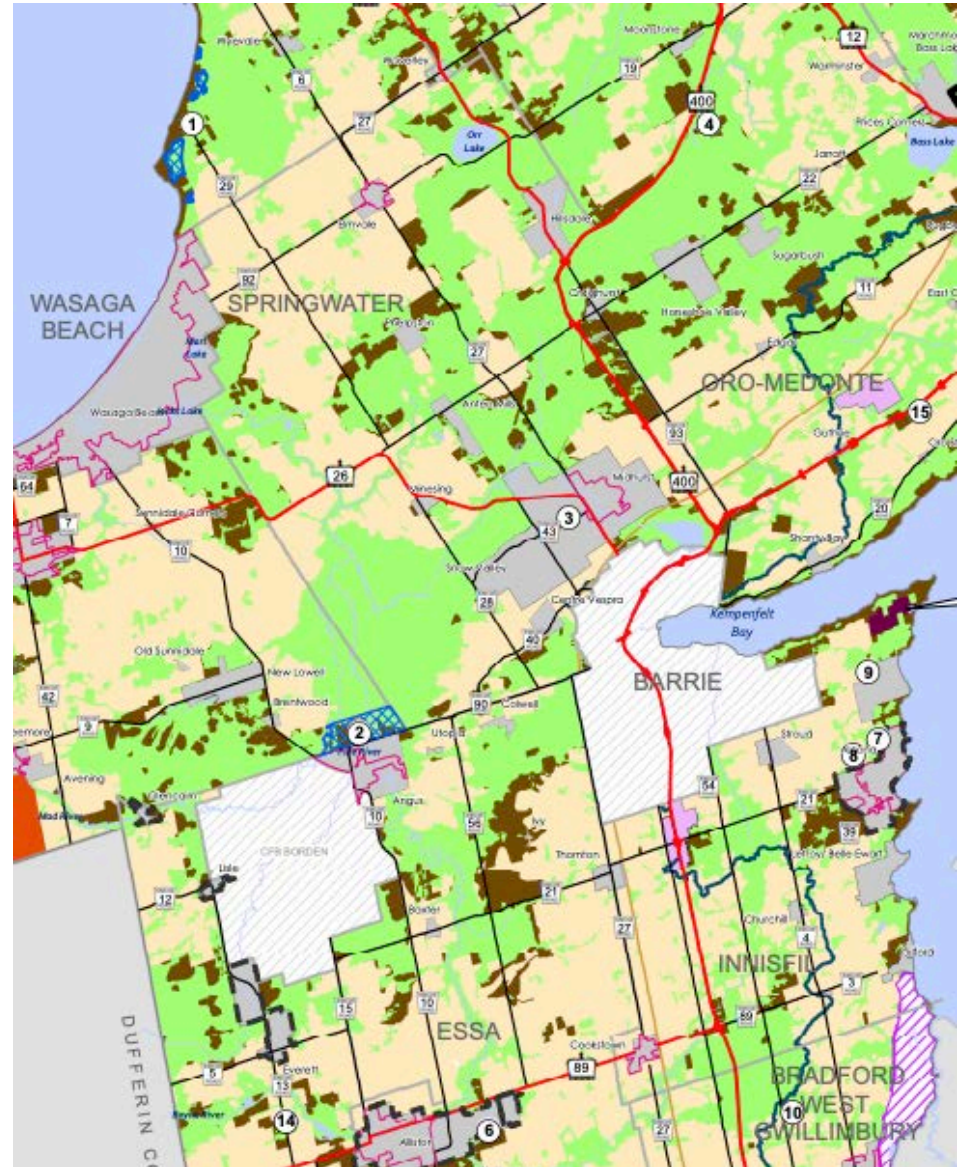
Council Workshop

Provincial Natural Heritage System Review & Refinement



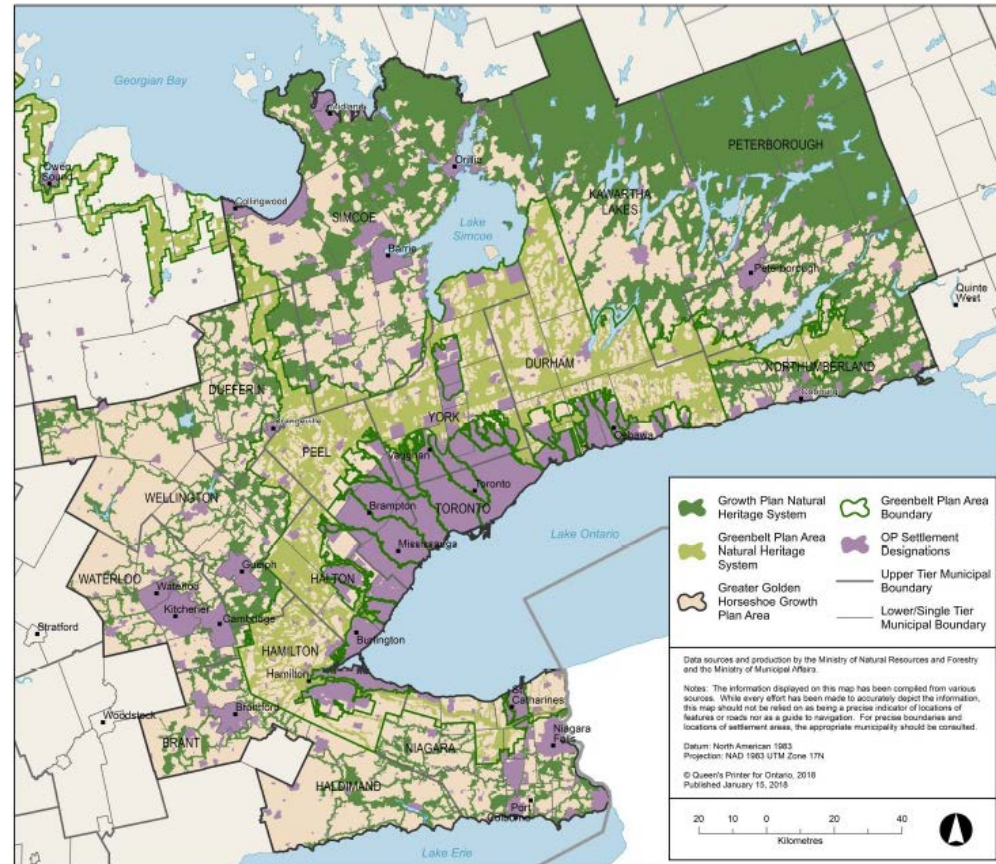
Current Natural Heritage System (NHS)

- County currently has an NHS in the form of the Greenlands designation
- Lower-tier municipalities also have an NHS which can go beyond Greenlands designation to protect local features and lands inside their settlements



Growth Plan Requirements

- Growth Plan amended in 2017 to indicate that Province would prepare Provincial NHS map
- Initially, policies were that once mapping was released it would apply to planning decisions—mapping released in 2018
- Growth Plan amended in 2019 to instead require that new mapping be implemented in upper tier OP's via the MCR
- However, County and lower-tiers already use NHS policies of Growth Plan since these policies apply to the NHS in effect
- As a result, main purpose of current exercise is to incorporate Growth Plan NHS mapping into County OP



Growth Plan Requirements (cont'd)

- Growth Plan NHS required to be identified as an overlay in Official Plans
- Greenlands designation will remain as is in County OP—will not be replaced by Growth Plan NHS
- County can refine Provincial mapping “with greater precision in a manner that is consistent with” the Growth Plan—this is what we are doing
- Refinement criteria prepared by Province—this is a technical exercise with limited ability to alter existing mapping
- It is not possible to replace Provincial NHS with “preferred” mapping



Effect of Growth Plan Policies

- For development in Growth Plan NHS, policies will supplement those that apply in existing Greenlands designation
- Policies applying to Growth Plan NHS will not apply in settlement areas
- Growth Plan policies also prohibit development in key hydrological features throughout County—but not in settlement areas
- Updated policies in County OP will require demonstration of no negative impact if lands are in NHS and will prohibit certain forms of development in key features and vegetation protection zones (or buffers)
- Exceptions are provided which permit additions to existing buildings to occur, subject to certain conditions
- Exceptions also provided to enable agricultural activities to continue
- Most restrictive policies of Provincial NHS generally affect lands that already have constraints due to other Provincial, County, local municipal, and CA policies and regulations that already protect Key Hydrologic Features, Key Hydrologic Areas, and Key Natural Heritage Features

Different Policy Frameworks Will Apply Based on Location Within County

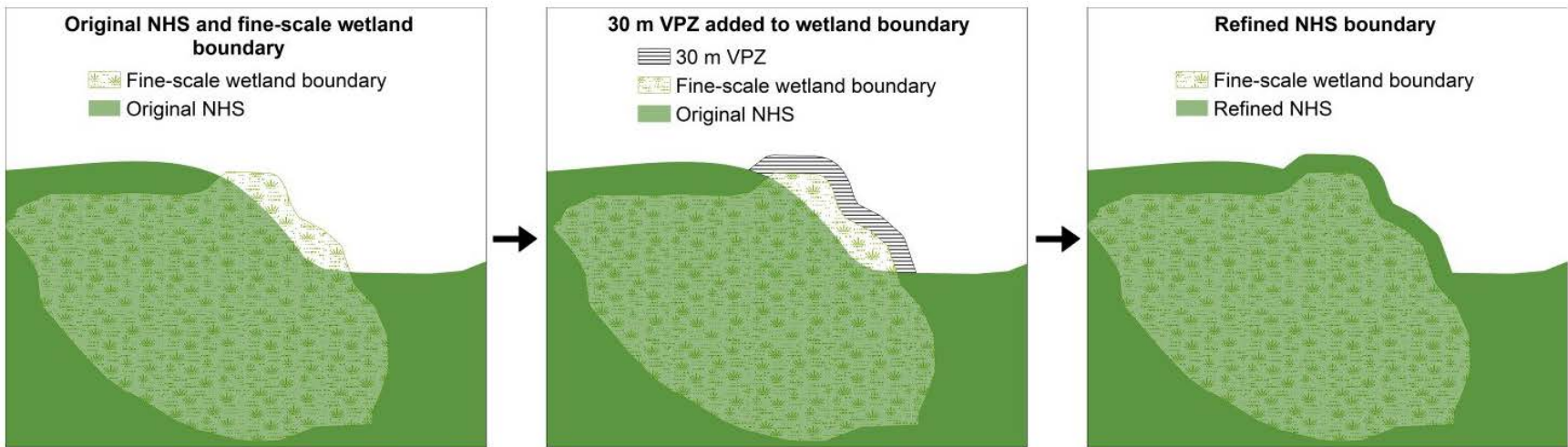
- Once Natural Heritage policies are implemented in County OP the Growth Plan NHS policies will apply only in the area that is mapped as Provincial NHS
- As part of the refinement process existing shoreline development areas and registered subdivisions outside settlements will be removed. Any NHS lands in these developments will remain protected in accordance with the planning approval process they already went through
- Settlement area expansions are permitted to extend into the Growth Plan NHS by the MCR if justified and deemed necessary in accordance with Growth Plan
- Policies that apply in the ORMCP Area, Niagara Escarpment Plan Area and Greenbelt Plan Area will continue to apply in those areas
- Other lands subject to Provincial Policy Statement will continue to be protected
- Lands subject to Lake Simcoe Protection Plan will continue to be governed by that Plan

Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan

- Components:
 - Core Areas and Linkages
- Criteria for Core Areas
 - $\geq 50\%$ natural cover or public lands
 - ≥ 500 ha in north of County, ≥ 100 ha in south of County
 - Mapping analysis applied buffers to connect and fill in gaps
 - Added Life Science ANSI and PSWs greater than 0.5 ha within 120 m
 - 30 m buffer applied to all core features
- Criteria for Linkages
 - Natural features and rural/ag lands without barriers
 - Connectivity
 - Length (no minimum)
 - Width ≥ 500 m (e.g., added 250 m on each side of watercourses that qualify)

Refinement of the Growth Plan NHS

Opportunity to refine the NHS followed guidance from the Growth Plan Regional NHS Mapping Technical Report



Technical Guidance for Refinements

- Minor, technical adjustments
- Addition of natural features continuous with boundary of the Provincial NHS
- Removal of small portions of NHS where there is built-up impervious development or infrastructure (that would act as barriers)
- Removal of small **isolated** portions of the NHS provided these areas have no natural features and are **not connected** to the larger provincial NHS

Additional Refinements

- Does the area fulfill the function of a core area or linkage area when evaluated in the context and scale of the Growth Plan NHS?
- Removal of registered plans of subdivision (where mapping is available)
 - This has been inconsistently done by the Growth Plan NHS mapping, and the County process will more accurately refine the map to complete this.

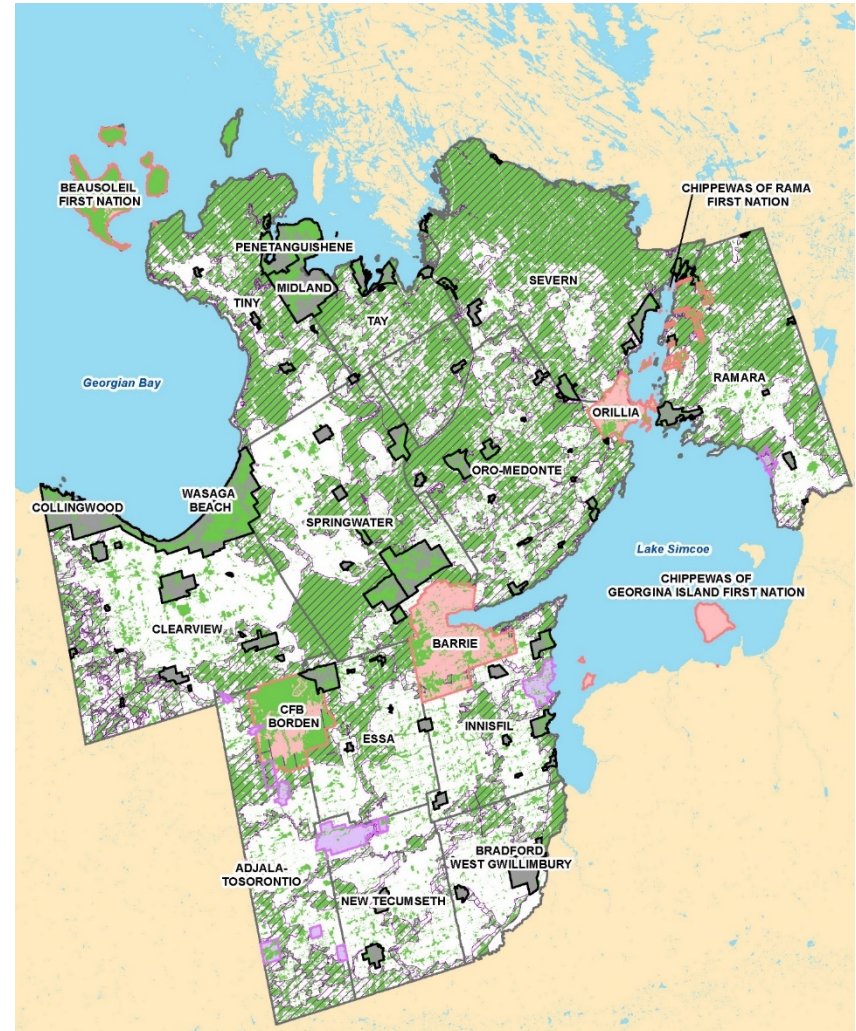
Process for Refinements

Obtain most recent natural features datasets:

- beaches, sand dunes, alvars, open bedrock, tallgrass prairie and savannah, all forests (excluding hedgerows) and wetland classes, and open water

Refinement process

- ArcGIS Online review and comment on datasets
- Evaluation—do areas fulfill core area or linkage area functions?
- Reconnaissance visits



Review of Growth Plan NHS

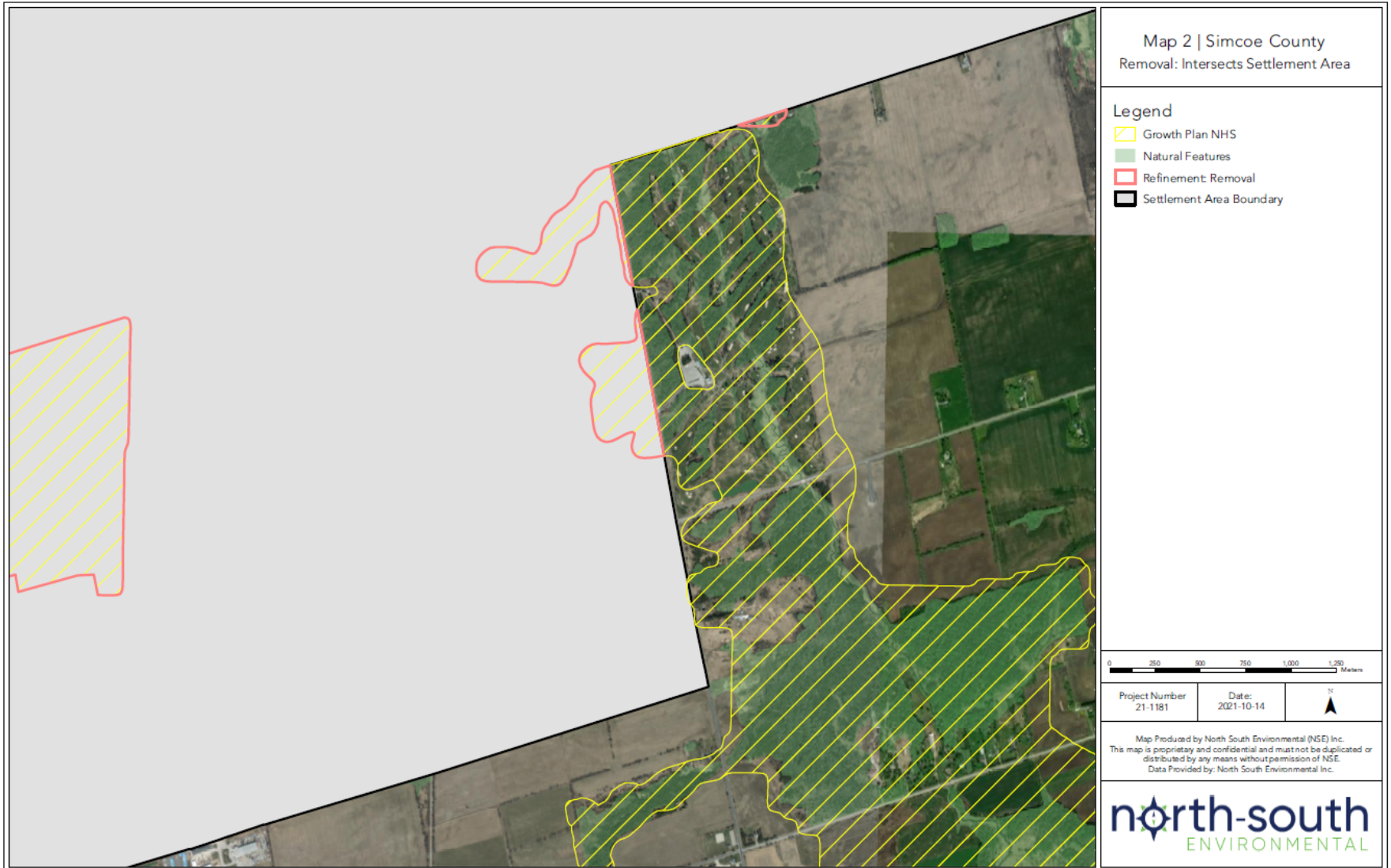
Compare base natural cover dataset to the Growth Plan NHS

- Identify areas where the GP NHS extends into settlement areas
 - These will be proposed for removal
- Identify areas where natural cover extends outside of the Growth Plan NHS
 - Determine if those areas should be added to the GP NHS based on technical guidance
- Identify areas where the GP NHS extends outside of the natural cover mapping
 - Determine if those areas qualify for consideration of refinements (i.e., removal) based on technical guidance

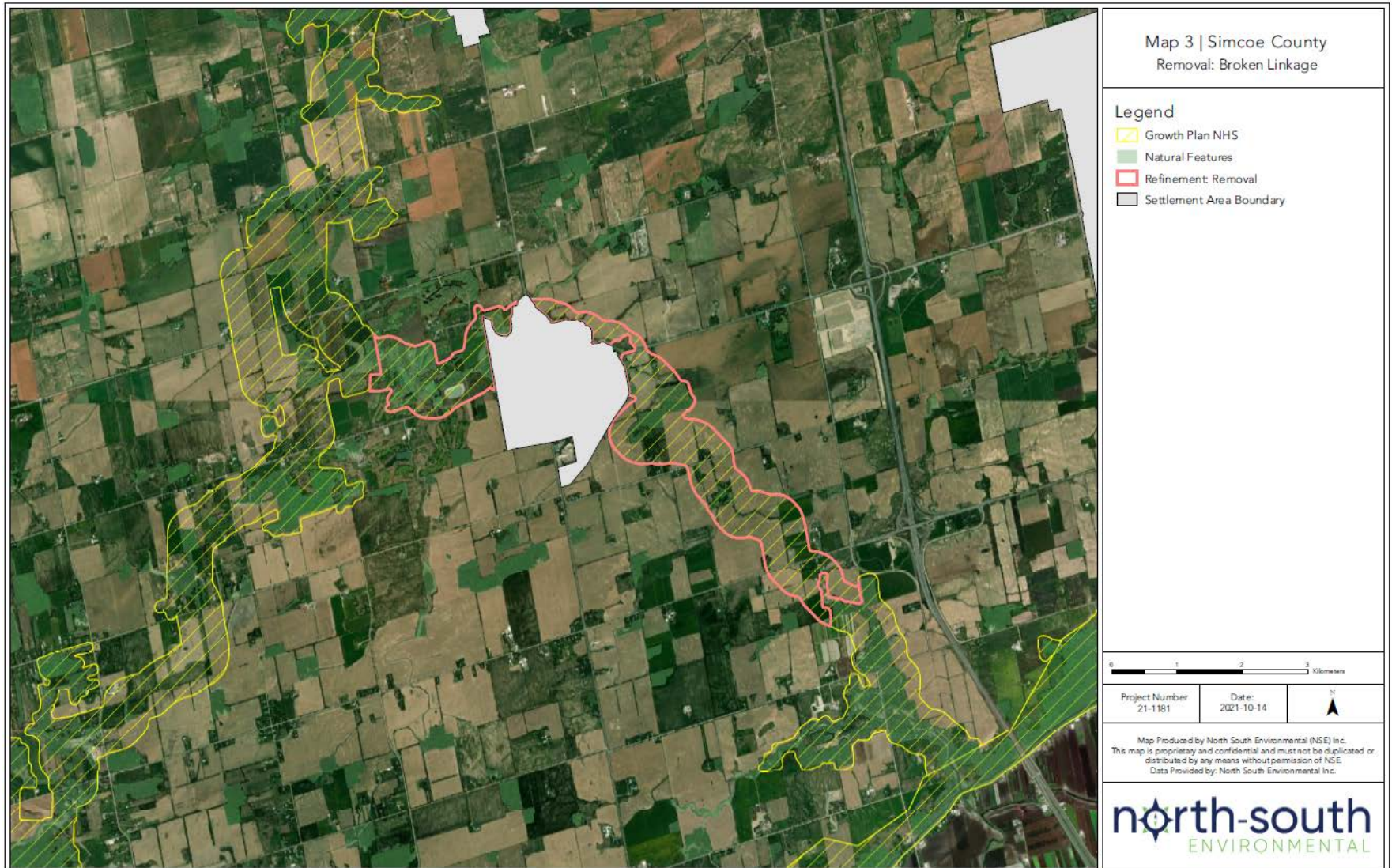
Examples of Additions and Removals



Examples of Additions and Removals



Examples of Additions and Removals



Examples of Additions and Removals



Examples of Additions and Removals



Refinements for Discussion



Technical Report and Mapping

- Prepare technical report of proposed refinements to the NHS
 - Provide supporting information, including any fine-scale mapping of natural features or infrastructure that was used to adjust the boundaries
- The technical report must be submitted to the Province for review along with the proposed official plan as part of the MCR

Timing of Review of Growth Plan NHS

Task	Completion
Draft Technical Report and Mapping – Growth Plan NHS Refinement	October 14, 2021
Consultation with public agencies, stakeholders and the public	October - December 2021
Refine draft technical report and mapping	January 2021
Complete Technical Report and Mapping Refinements of the Growth Plan NHS	February 2022

- Following the finalization of the mapping, an OPA will be prepared
- OPA process requires public consultation and a public meeting
- Once adopted by Council, OPA goes to the Province for approval