

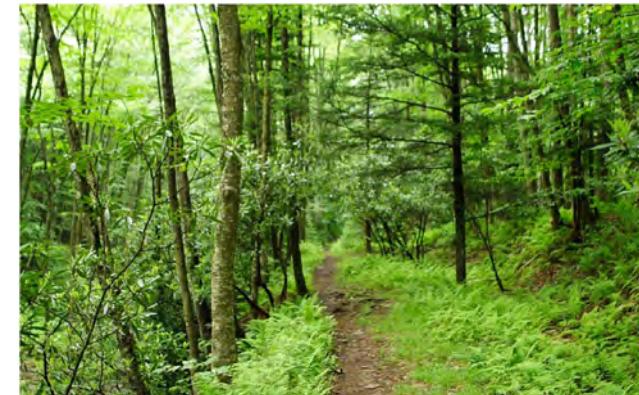
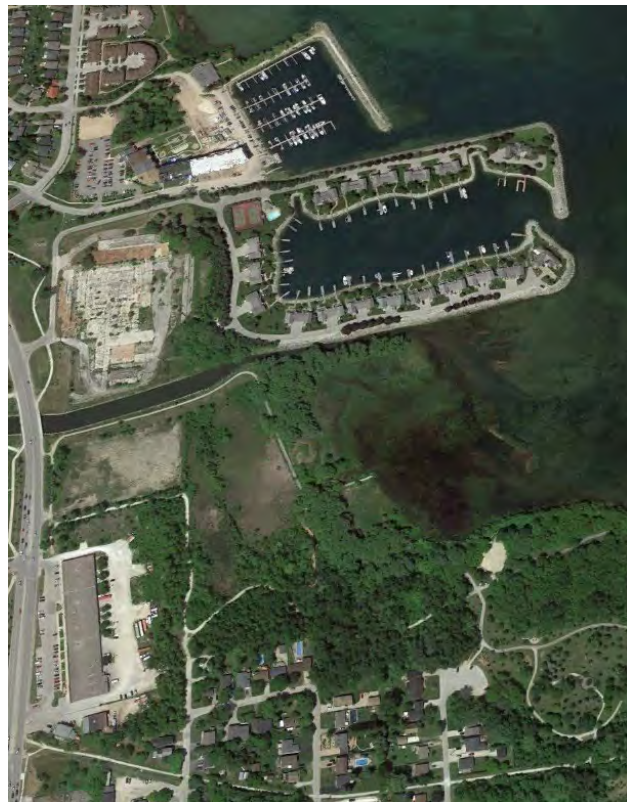


COUNTY OF SIMCOE

# MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

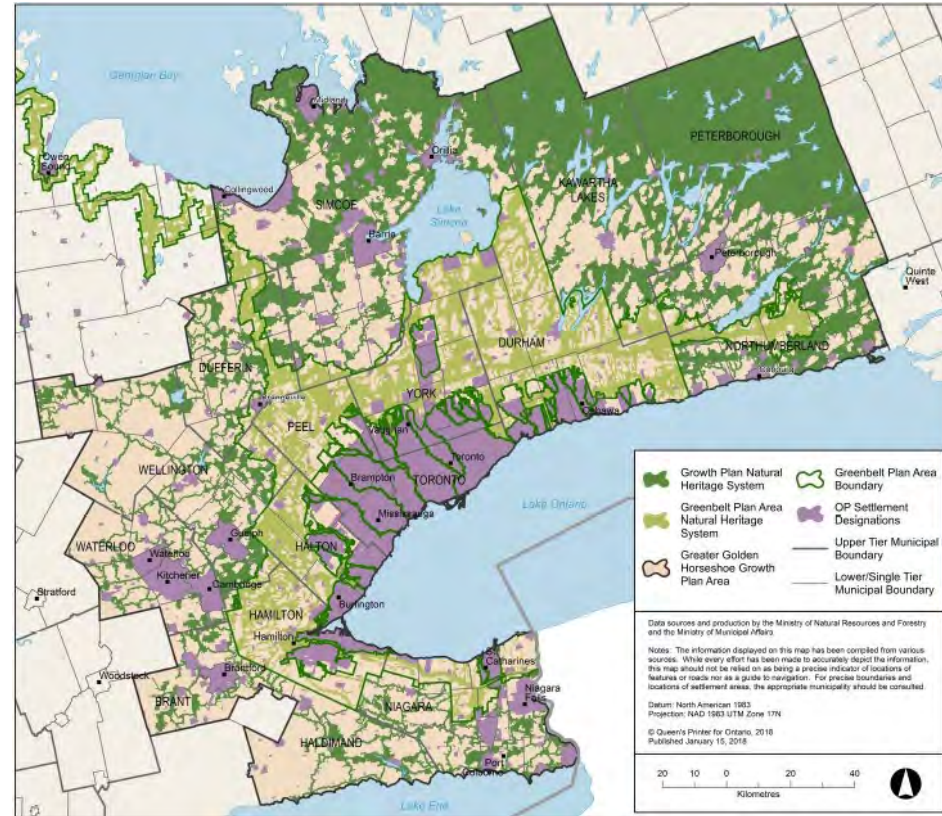
Council Meeting – April 12, 2022

## Provincial Natural Heritage System Review & Refinement



# Growth Plan Requirements

- Growth Plan amended in 2017 to indicate that Province would prepare map of Provincial NHS
- Initially, the policies indicated that once the mapping was released – it would immediately 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 and apply after completed
- As a result – the main purpose of the current exercise is to incorporate the Growth Plan NHS mapping in the County OP



# Growth Plan Requirements (cont'd)

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

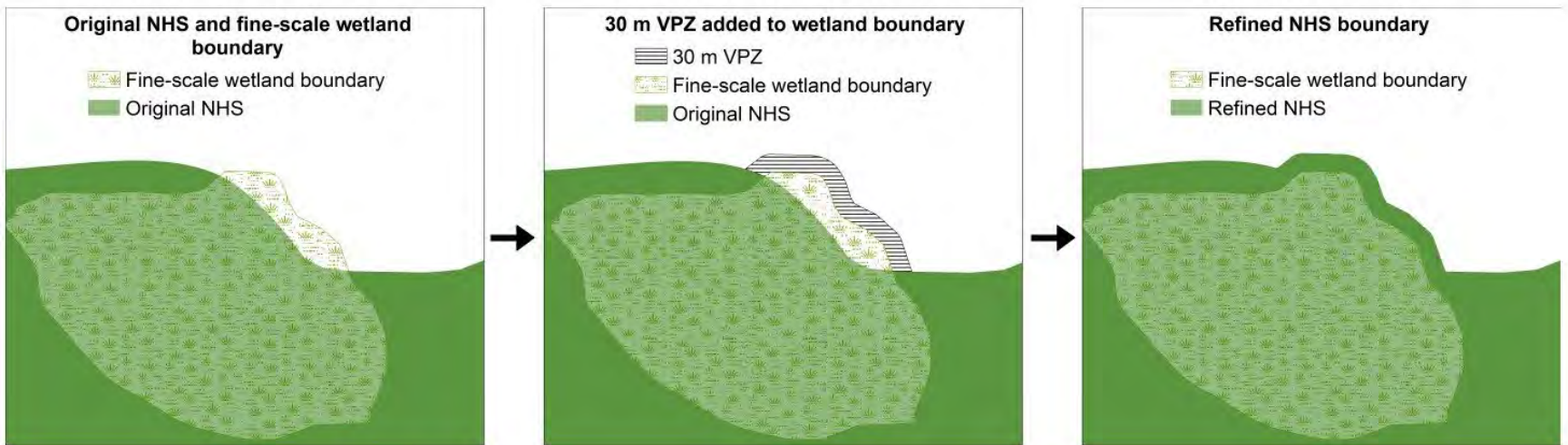


# Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan

- Components:
  - Core Areas and Linkages
- Criteria for Core Areas
  - $\geq 50\%$  natural cover or public lands
  - $\geq 500$  ha in north of County,  $\geq 100$  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  $\geq 500$  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 (M-Plans)
  - This has been inconsistently done by the Growth Plan NHS mapping, and the County process will more accurately refine the map to complete this.

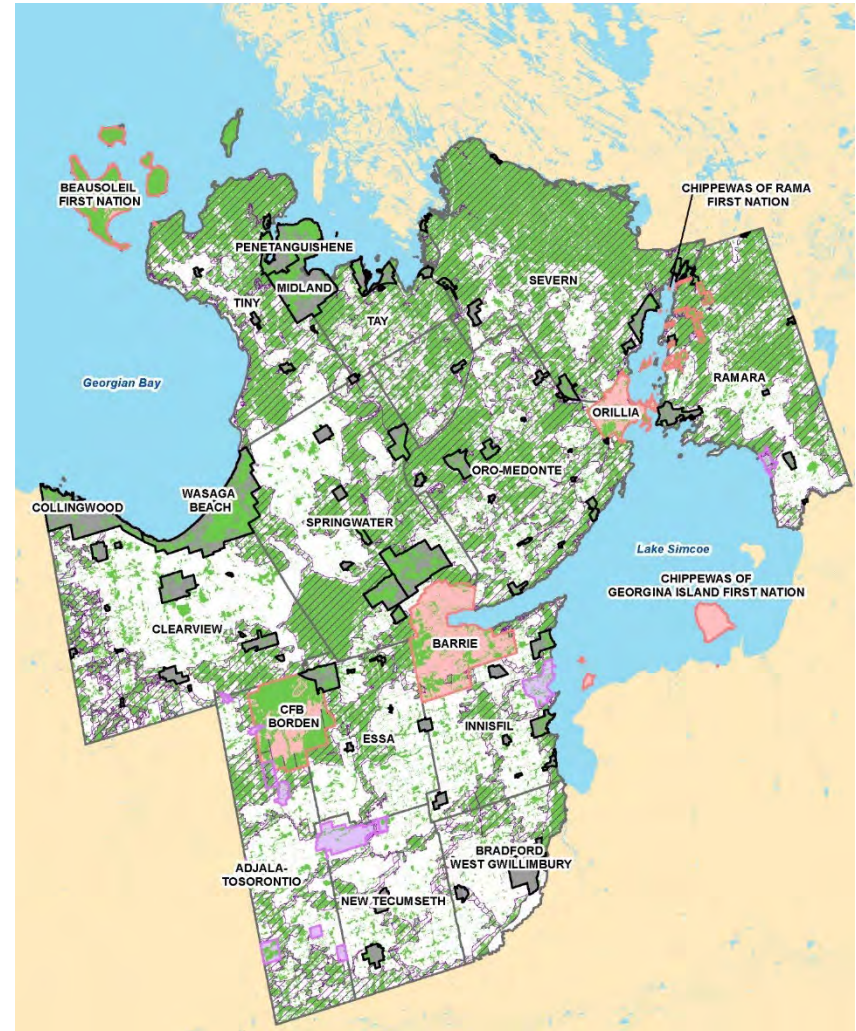
# Process for Refinements

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 of natural features dataset:

- 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

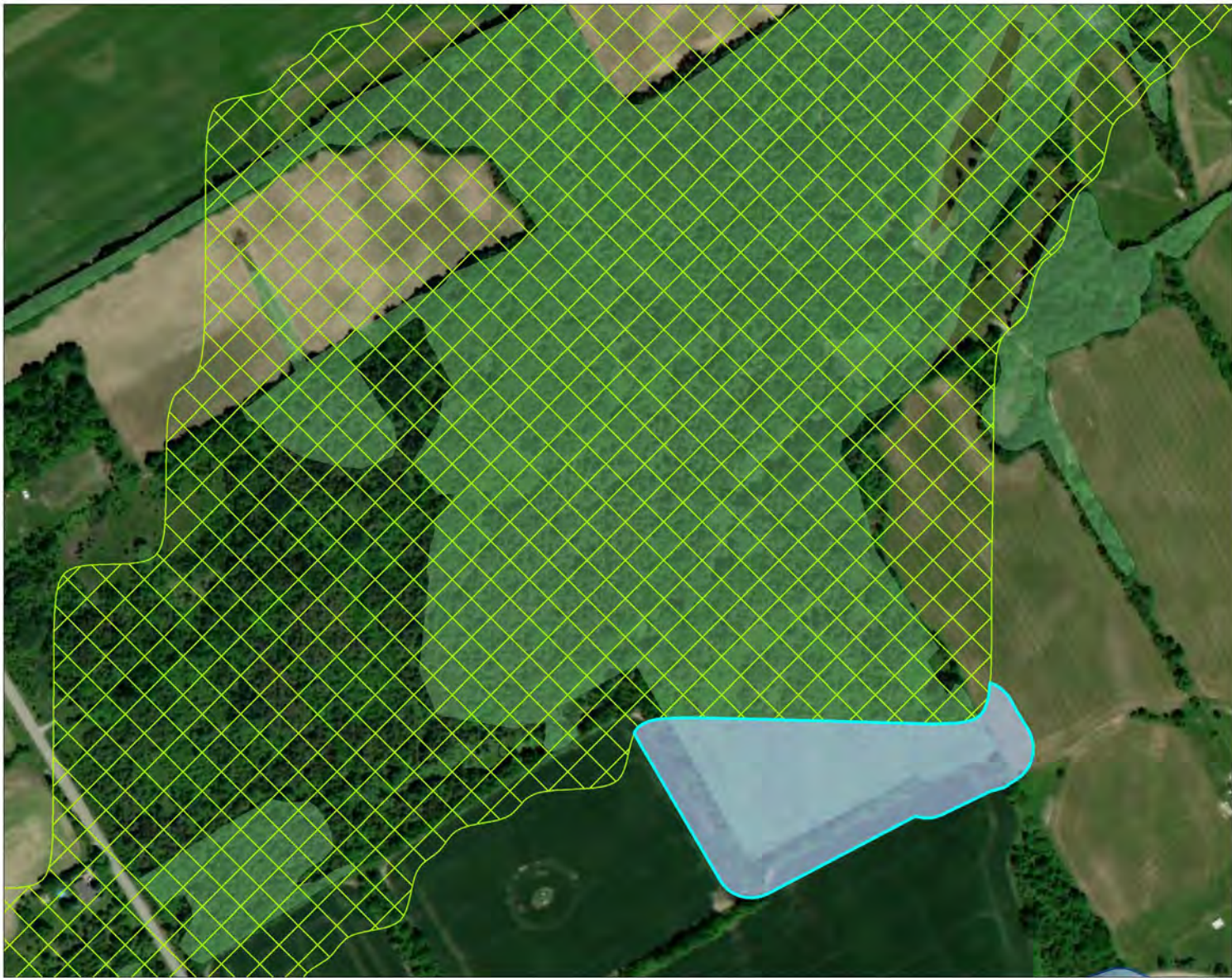
- Identify areas where the GP NHS extends into settlement areas
  - These will be proposed for removal
- Identify areas where natural cover extends outside of the Growth Plan NHS
  - Determine if those areas should be added to the GP NHS based on technical guidance
- Identify areas where the GP NHS extends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

# Refinements to Growth Plan NHS

- ‘Review and Refinements to the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan – DRAFT’, dated October 14, 2021
- Comments received through the County’s on-line platform, through e-mail, and by phone
- Draft proposed refinements of the Growth Plan NHS mapping were discussed with the public as part of the public engagement sessions on October 18 and 19, 2021
- ‘Simcoe County Municipal Comprehensive Review - Review and Refinements to the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan’, dated March 7, 2022




# Refinements to Growth Plan NHS: Additions

- Natural feature added from updated mapping
  - Except those <1 ha in size (majority mapping discrepancies and areas that would not result in a meaningful addition at the county-scale)
- Natural features bisected by a road or railway, but continuous with the boundary of the NHS
  - Contains at least 2 of the following natural features: forested areas greater than 10 ha in size, wetlands (>50% of the total area), or watercourses; or
  - Contains at least 1 of the natural features listed above and is part of the County's Greenland system; or,
  - Contains a Provincially Significant Wetland.



**Map 1 | Simcoe County**  
Proposed Addition

**Legend**

-  Growth Plan NHS
-  Natural Features
-  Proposed Addition to the Growth Plan NHS

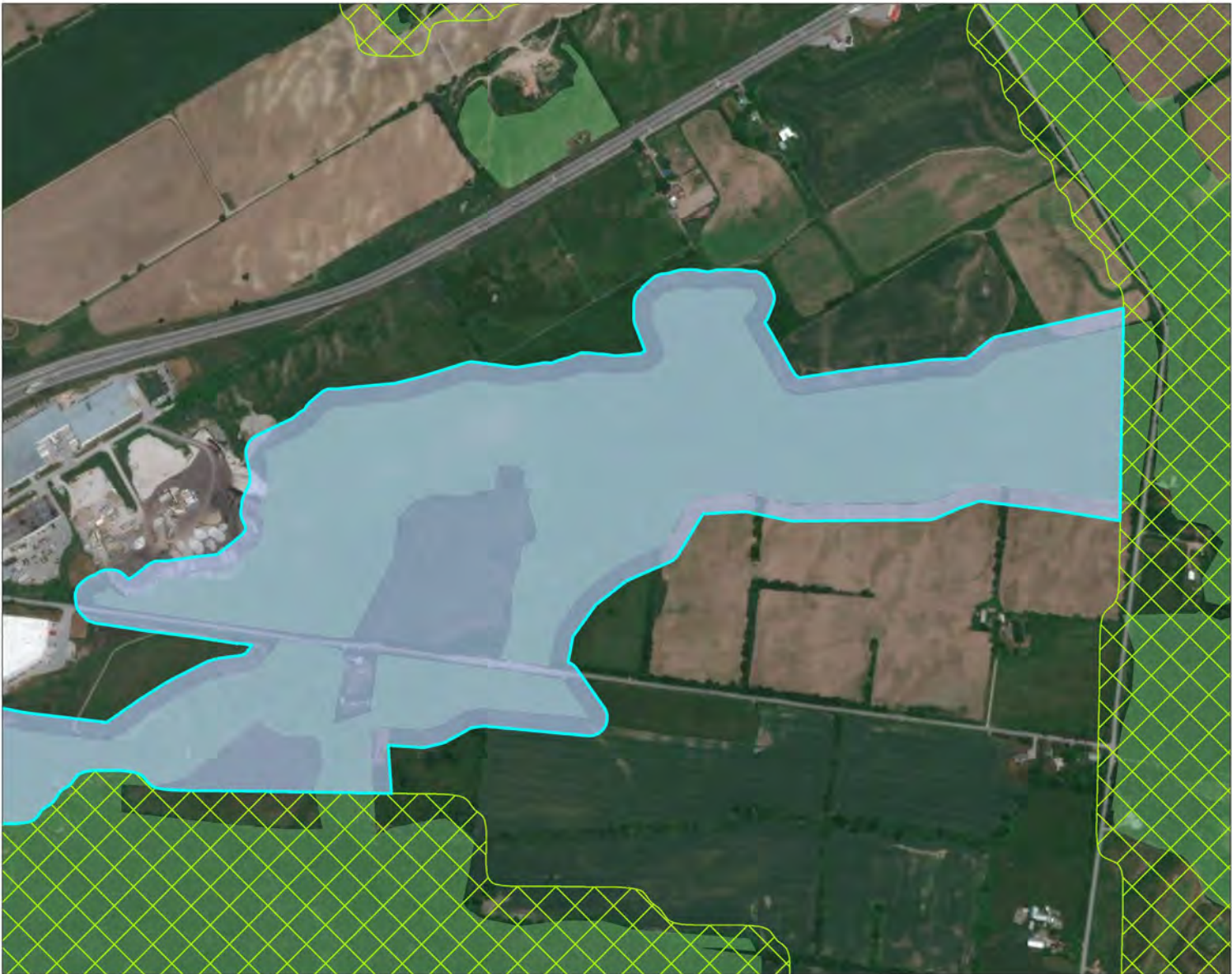


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**Map 2 | Simcoe County**  
Proposed Addition:  
Natural Feature Bisected by Roadway

**Legend**

-  Growth Plan NHS
-  Natural Features
-  Proposed Addition to the Growth Plan NHS



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



# Refinements to Growth Plan NHS: Removals

- Applying the scenario for making removals to the Growth Plan NHS as per the Growth Plan NHS Technical Report (OMNRF 2018):
  - Removal of small, isolated portions of the NHS that protrude from the Greenbelt Plan boundary or settlement areas provided these areas have no natural features and are not connected to the larger provincial NHS
  - Removing areas of the Growth Plan NHS that overlapped with settlement areas, including where linkages were bisected by settlement and not longer met the ecological intent of the linkage (i.e., to connect Core Areas)
  - Removing registered plans of subdivisions (M-Plans) outside of settlement areas from the Growth Plan NHS, throughout the County.

**Map 3 | Simcoe County**  
Proposed Removal:  
Isolated Patch of Growth Plan NHS

**Legend**

-  Growth Plan NHS
-  Natural Features
-  Lands Not Subject to the Growth Plan NHS
-  Proposed Removal from the Growth Plan NHS







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**Map 4 | Simcoe County**  
Proposed Removal:  
Growth Plan NHS overlaps City of Barrie

**Legend**

-  Growth Plan NHS
-  Natural Features
-  Lands Not Subject to the Growth Plan NHS
-  Proposed Removal from the Growth Plan NHS



Project Number  
21-1181

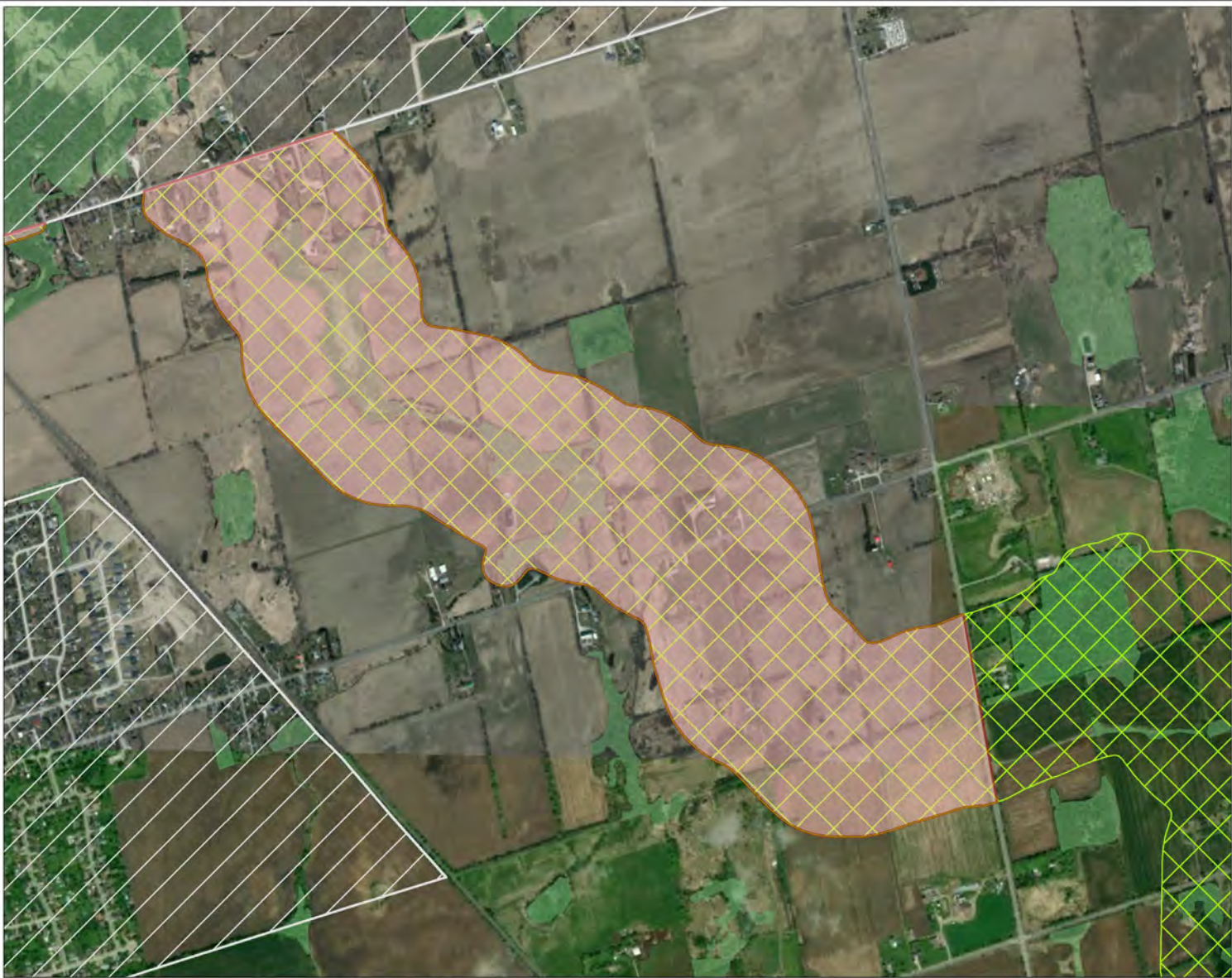
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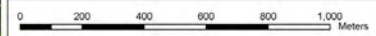


### Map 5 | Simcoe County

Proposed Removal:  
Non-functional Linkage

#### Legend

-  Growth Plan NHS
-  Natural Features
-  Lands Not Subject to the Growth Plan NHS
-  Proposed Removal from the Growth Plan NHS






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**Map 6 | Simcoe County**  
Proposed Removal: Growth Plan NHS  
Overlaps Registered Plan of Subdivision

**Legend**

-  Growth Plan NHS
-  Proposed Removal from the Growth Plan NHS
-  Registered Plan of Subdivision



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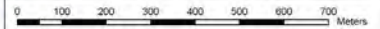


### Map 7 | Simcoe County

Proposed Removal: Growth Plan NHS  
Overlaps Shoreline Residential Area

#### Legend

-  Growth Plan NHS
-  Shoreline Residential
-  Proposed Removal from the Growth Plan NHS



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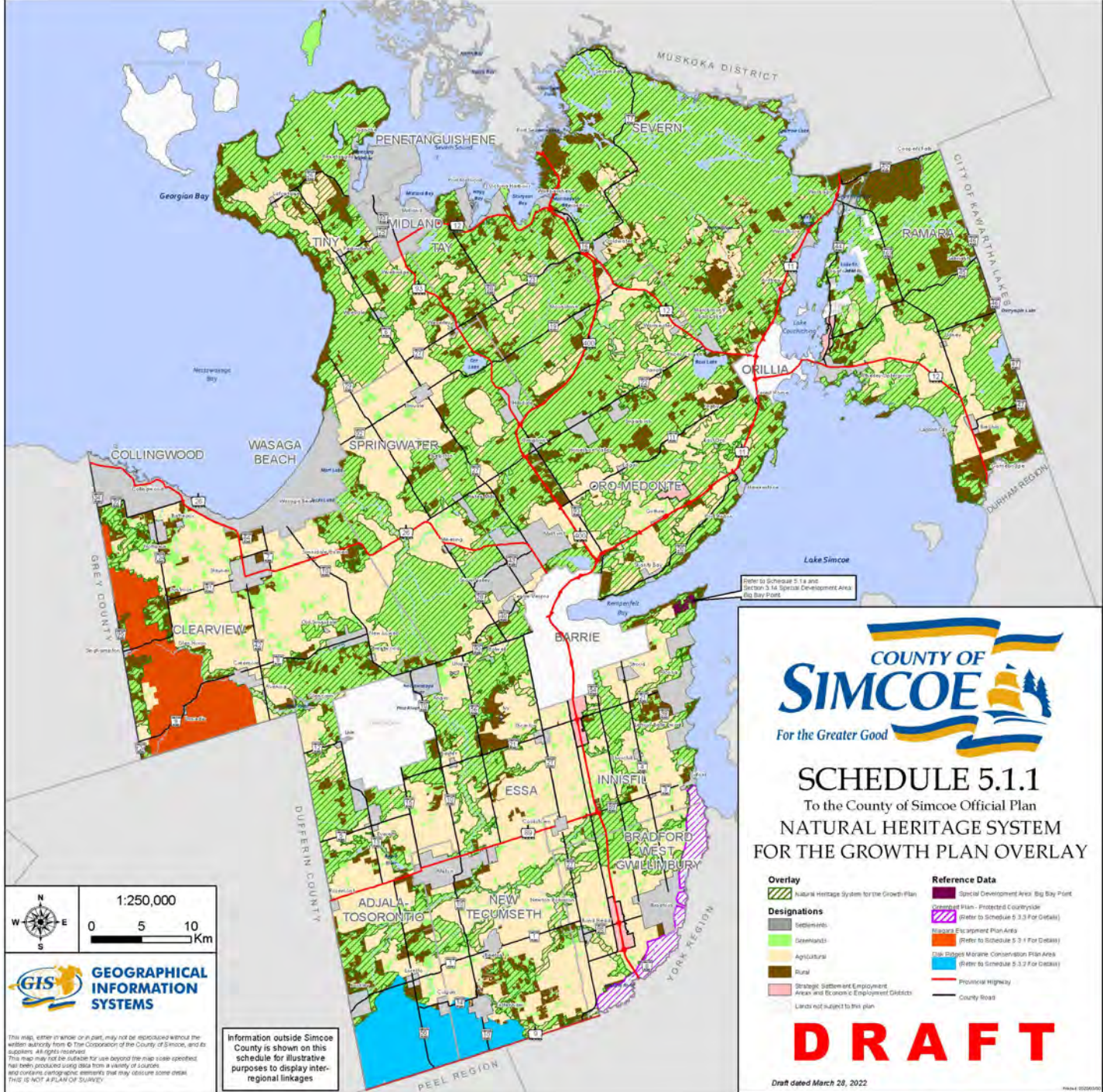


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# Summary of Results of Growth Plan NHS Refinement Exercise

- **Additions: 208 patches = 4,628.5 ha**
- **Removals: 569 patches = 4,648.9 ha**
- Net Difference = reduction of 20.4 ha from the Growth Plan NHS area, but an increase in natural cover within the Growth Plan NHS
- Net result: **increase in natural features** included in the Growth Plan NHS and an **increase in the overall connectivity** of the NHS as a result of more accurate mapping and a closer look at the NHS within Simcoe County that better achieves the objectives of the Growth Plan NHS:
  - “maintain, restore, or enhance the diversity and connectivity of the system and the long-term ecological or hydrologic functions of the features and areas”.



**SCHEDULE 5.1.1**  
 To the County of Simcoe Official Plan  
**NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM**  
**FOR THE GROWTH PLAN OVERLAY**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Overlay</b>  | <b>Reference Data</b>  |
| Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan                                 | Special Development Area - Big Bay Point                                       |
| <b>Designations</b>   | Protected Plan - Protected Countryside (Refer to Schedule 5.3.3 For Details)   |
| Settlements   | Niagara Planning Plan Area (Refer to Schedule 5.3.1 For Details)               |
| Wetlands  | Niagara-Matamoras Conservation Plan Area (Refer to Schedule 5.3.2 For Details) |
| Agricultural  | Provincial Highway   |
| Rural   | County Road  |
| Strategic Settlement and Employment Areas and Economic Employment Districts |  |
| Lands not subject to this plan  |  |

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Information outside Simcoe County is shown on this schedule for illustrative purposes to display inter-regional linkages

**DRAFT**

Draft dated March 28, 2022