High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF): Lanark Community Forest: (August 8, 2024)

Summary

Lanark County owns 4,619 hectares (11,409 acres) of forested land in Lanark County. The location of these properties can be found on the Lanark County website at http://www.cgis.com/cpal/?map=Lanark. The County also maintains a detailed GIS inventory of the forests and natural heritage values for each property. Maps can be found in the Forest Management Plan (2011). The Lanark Community Forest is managed according to the principles of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). FSC certification provides the assurance that the forests are sustainably managed to a world-recognized standard.

FSC principle 9 addresses High Conservation Value Forests. It states that "Management activities in High Conservation Value Forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests." Lanark County has evaluated the Community Forest using a framework which identifies six potential categories of HCVF. Sources of information for identifying HCVF include the OMNRF's Forest Resource Inventory and Natural Resources and Values Information System (NRVIS), natural heritage inventories, and the knowledge of the forest manager and members of the community. The HCVF report has been reviewed by the Community Forest Working Group, the EOMF Certification Working Group and peer reviewed by an independent Biologist. The Forest Management Plan (2011) provides guidance for conservation of HCVFs when a timber harvest operation is planned. HCVF include a mapped area of 784.9 hectares, and additional unmapped areas of species at risk habitat. The full HCVF report is available for review at the Lanark County office. The results are summarized in the following table.

HCV Summary by category for **Lanark County Forest**		
HCVF Category	Description	Total Mapped Area
HCVF Category 1: Species at risk and their habitat (SAR)	Prior to timber harvest, natural forests are surveyed for species at risk and their habitat. Forests with SAR and SAR habitat are managed as HCVF. The primary SAR species/ habitat which have been identified are butternut, turtles and ginseng.	SAR habitat is not mapped due to sensitivity.
HCVF Category 1: Seasonal concentrations of species	Two types of HCVF have been identified in this category. Six properties contain portions of deer winter concentration areas. One other property is adjacent to White Lake, a waterfowl staging area.	315.6 hectares.
HCVF Category 4: Forests that provide a significant ecological service in mediating flooding and/or drought, controlling stream flow regulation, and water quality	This category includes four provincially significant wetlands on the Lanark Community Forest.	162.5 hectares.
HCVF Category 6: Culturally important sites	Two sites have been identified: a pioneer cemetery and a forest containing large, canoe-quality white birch used by members of the Algonquin First Nation.	30.7 hectares.
HCVF Category 6: A significant overlap of ecological values that collectively constitute HCVF	The large remote property in Pakenham contains PSW, good representations of white pine over granite, as well as unique and evident geological features (the Champlain Sea). There are 47.2 hectares of forest with FRI age greater than 110. The property contains a variety of water features including Glen and Forsythe Creeks, open marsh and treed swamps. Portions of the wetlands are part of a provincially significant wetland complex. There is a high probability of turtle habitat (SAR). Forest harvesting is only permitted in accessible portions of the north area. 92.1 Ha of PSW is accounted under category 4.	276.1 hectares.
Total Area		784.9 hectares

High Conservation Value Forest Assessment Framework – GLSL

This framework is designed to be used in order to help identify potential High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF) in the context of achieving certification to FSC Canada's Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Standard. It is based on a framework originally developed by ProForest and since that time it has been applied in many forest regions around the world.

The framework is organized as a table covering six categories derived from the definition of HCVFs from the FSC standards. The six categories are:

Category 1: Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant **concentrations of biodiversity values** (e.g., endemism, endangered species, refugia);

Category 2: Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant **large landscape level forests**, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance;

Category 3: Forest areas that are in or contain **rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems**;

Category 4: Forest areas that provide basic **services of nature in critical situations** (e.g., watershed protection, erosion control);

Category 5: Forest areas **fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities** (e.g., subsistence, health); and,

Category 6: Forest areas **critical to local communities´ traditional cultural identity** (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).

Each category has a question or questions (the left-hand column below) that aim to identify whether the management unit contains any of the values relevant to each category. Negative answers to these questions mean that the forest operation likely does not include High Conservation Values (HCV) in that category. Positive answers lead to further investigation. The second column explains the rationale for the conservation of the particular value. The third column provides sources of information on these values (e.g., COSEWIC lists in Canada, Conservation Data Centre lists, etc.). The fourth column provides further guidance to help determine whether or not a particular area might be considered a High Conservation Value Forest.

Scale and diversity in the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence region: This toolkit is designed to be used across the GLSL region, and applied in small private forests, on community forests and in large public forests. The manager may be operating in a highly fragmented landscape, where the stands with exceptionally high conservation value may be very small and require a high degree of protection, or in a much more intact landscape, where the HCVF toolkit can help to identify relatively broad features across the landscape in which the changes to management activities may be relatively modest although nevertheless significant at the landscape level. Furthermore, these diverse management regimes occur across a range of ecosystem types, from the Carolinian forests of southwestern Ontario through the mixed wood forests of southern Ontario and Québec and northwards to forests that are in the boreal transition zone. This diversity means that HCVF assessments will be carried out differently on these various forests, and will produce vastly different results. In developing a toolkit that is intended to apply across this diversity it is not possible to provide specific thresholds or numerical responses to questions such as "What is the minimum size of a HCVF area?" or "What percentage of a management unit should be designated as HCVFs?"

"Critical habitat" and "Essential Habitat." In this Toolkit, and elsewhere in this standard, the term "Critical habitat" is used only in the context of Species at Rsk that have been listed by federal or provincial agencies. It is used in this narrow sense in order to align the use of the term in this Standard with the legal requirements that exist in federal and provincial legislation pertaining to maintaining and restoring critical habitat for species at risk. "Essential habitat" has the same meaning as "critical habitat," but applies to all wildlife species, and not only to rare, threatened or endangered species.

Item	Rationale	Sources of information	Further Guidance	EOMF HCV: Lanark Community Forest						
Category 1) Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g., endemism, endangered species, refugia)				**Comp.**	**Value**	**Year Completed**	**Stakeholder**	**Management Guidance**	**Monitoring**	**Area (Ha)**
1. Does the forest contain concentrations of species at risk as listed by international, national or provincial authorities?	An HCVF designation can support and enhance the measures to protect species at risk that are described under Criterion 6.2, especially in encouraging integrated approaches across the landscape where there are multiple species at risk or a concentration of attributes (populations or habitat) for specific species.	Species are designated as rare, threatened or endangered federally by COSEWIC and provincially by MNRF. MNRF maintains current lists of Species at Risk (SAR) and provided Lanark County with a list which is included in the 2011 Forest Management Plan. Lanark County commissions pre-harvest natural heritage inventories to identify SAR in harvest blocks.	- Are any of the rare, threatened or endangered species in the forest a species representative of habitat types naturally occurring in the management unit? (GUIDANCE) - Do any of the identified rare, threatened or endangered species (individually or concentration of species) have a demonstrated sensitivity to forest operations? (GUIDANCE) - Does the forest contain critical habitat for any individual species or concentration of species identified in the above questions? (GUIDANCE) Does the forest contain potential critical habitat that could facilitate the recovery of listed species? (GUIDANCE)	All (Potential - as identified through pre-harvest natural heritage inventories)	Species at Risk.	NA	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20 Blandings Turtle Butternut American Ginseng OMNR Habitat Regulations and Descriptions: Other Identified SAR	Harvest areas identified in 2023-2027 Operating Plan. Prescriptions are based upon OMNR guidelines. Forest Manager monitors implementation of prescription. OMNR maintains a guideline effectiveness monitoring program.	NA
2. Does the forest contain a concentration of species having a restricted geographical range?	Ensures the maintenance of vulnerable and/or irreplaceable elements of biodiversity.	WWF Ecoregion Conservation Assessment (www.panda.org). Conservation International 'hotspot' areas (www.conservation.org)	- Is there a concentration of regionally endemic species in the forest that includes species representative of habitat types naturally occurring in the management unit? (DEFINITIVE) - Do any of the identified endemic species have a demonstrated sensitivity to forest operations? (GUIDANCE) - Does the forest contain essential habitat of species identified in the above questions? (GUIDANCE)	None Identified						

3. Does the forest include regionally significant seasonal concentration of species?	Addresses wildlife habitat requirements critical to maintaining population viability (regional “hot spots”).	National and local agencies with responsibility for wildlife conservation; Results from habitat models; Local experts; traditional knowledge Local information source is the OMNRF’s Forest Resource Inventory and the Natural Resources and Values Information System (NRVIS).	- Is there an area of the forest which provides essential habitat for a variety of species? (GUIDANCE) Is there an area of the forest in which there are high concentrations of wildlife populations, including seasonal concentrations? (GUIDANCE) - Is there an Important Bird Area in the forest? (DEFINITIVE) - How protected are similar wildlife concentration areas within the region? (GUIDANCE) - Is it a wildlife concentration area for more than one species? (GUIDANCE) - Are there any landscape features or habitat characteristics that tend to correlate with significant temporal concentrations of species (e.g., where species occurrence data is limited)? (GUIDANCE)	Darling 15	Waterfowl Staging Area	NA	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20	No operations planned in compartment for 2023-2027. CWS monitors waterfowl populations.	91.7
				Dalhousie 6	Deer Wintering Area	NA	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20	No operations planned in compartment for 2023-2027. Population and habitat monitoring carried out by OMNR	9.0
				Darling 4-5	Deer Wintering Area	Red Pine Harvest Planned for 2024	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20	**Operations planned** in compartment for 2023-2027. Population and habitat monitoring carried out by OMNR	47.2
				Darling 13	Deer Wintering Area	NA	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20	No operations planned in compartment for 2023-2027. Population and habitat monitoring carried out by OMNR	80.1
				Lanark 3	Deer Wintering Area	Red Pine Harvest 2019	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20	No operations planned in compartment for 2023-2027. Forest Manager monitors	6.5

									implementation. Population and habitat monitoring carried out by OMNR	
				Lavant 26-27	Deer Wintering Area	NA	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20	No operations planned in compartment for 2023-2027. Population and habitat monitoring carried out by OMNR	16.0
				South Sherbrooke 2	Deer Wintering Area	NA	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20 Recreation Use Policy: Designated Use Restrictions	Recreation property, commercial forestry limited. Population and habitat monitoring carried out by OMNR	65.1

4. Does the forest support regionally significant species (e.g., species declining regionally, culturally important species)?		Regionally significant species are determined using the sources below. 1. Conservation Data Centre G3, S1-S3 species and communities 2. Range and population estimates from national or local authorities and local experts for: a) red listed species (see sources above); b) species at risk (in existing legislation and/or policy); c) results from habitat models, d) species representative of habitat types naturally occurring in the management unit or focal species; and, e) species identified as ecologically significant through consultation.	- Is the regionally significant species in significant decline as a result of forest management? (DEFINITIVE) - Is the population of regionally significant species locally at risk (e.g., continuing trend is declining rather than stable or improving)? (GUIDANCE) - Does the forest contain limiting or essential habitat for regionally significant species? (GUIDANCE) - Are there any ecological or taxonomic groups of species or sub-species that would together constitute a regionally significant concentration? (GUIDANCE)	None identified. The FMP provides for areas of concern to protect habitat of forest nesting raptors. Populations of these species are not known to be declining.						

5. Does the forest support concentrations of species at the edge of their natural ranges or outlier populations?	Relevant conservation issues include vulnerability against range contraction and potential genetic variation at range edge. Outlier and edge of range populations may also play a critical role in genetic/population adaptation to global warming.	See above	- Are there naturally occurring outlier populations of commercial tree species? (GUIDANCE) Are any of the range edge or outlier species a species representative of habitat types naturally occurring in the management unit? (GUIDANCE) - Are there any ecological or taxonomic groups of range edge and/or outlier species/sub-species that would together constitute a globally, nationally or regionally significant concentration? (GUIDANCE) - Are the species potentially negatively impacted by forest management? (GUIDANCE) - Is the population of ranged edge and /or outlier species?	None identified.						
6. Does the forest lie within, adjacent to, or contain a conservation area: a) designated by an international authority, b) legally designated or proposed by relevant federal/provincial/ territorial legislative body, or c) identified in regional land use plans or conservation plans?	Ensures compliance with the conservation intent of a conservation area and that regionally significant forests are evaluated for consistency with the conservation intent.	Madawaska Highlands Land Use Plan (1997)	- Are there forest areas important to connect conservation areas in order to maintain the values for which the conservation areas were identified? (GUIDANCE) - Are there forest areas important to buffer conservation areas in order to maintain the values for which the conservation areas were identified? (GUIDANCE)	A small portion of the James property north of the Campbell Side Road in Darling Township is within the area of the Madawaska Highlands Land Use Plan. This Plan applies only to Crown Lands.						

Category 2) Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance									
7. Does the forest constitute or form part of a globally, nationally or regionally significant forest landscape that includes populations of most native species and sufficient habitat such that there is a high likelihood of long-term species persistence?	The forest must not only be large enough to potentially support most or all native species, but long-term, large-scale natural disturbances can take place without losing their resilience to maintain the full range of ecosystem processes and functions (i.e., naturally functioning landscape). Forests meeting the threshold for intactness will be rare or absent throughout most of the GLSL area. In these cases refer to the following question, which focuses on identifying "remnant intact forests" that exemplify some of the attributes of intact forests	Global Forest Watch Canada maintains information on large-scale intact forest areas in Canada	Are there forest landscapes unfragmented by permanent infrastructure (including roads) and greater than 30,000 ha, with less than 5% of the area affected by non-permanent human disturbances;? (DEFINITIVE)	Not Applicable.						
8. Are large landscape level forests (i.e., large unfragmented forests) rare or absent in the forest or ecoregion?	In regions or forests where large functioning landscape level forests are rare or do not exist (highly fragmented forest), forest areas that have had significantly less anthropogenic impact than surrounding areas may warrant consideration as HCVFs, so that the distinctive qualities in those forests		Are there areas that support viable populations of most species, and which have significantly lower anthropogenic impacts than surrounding regions? (GUIDANCE) To assist in the development of management prescriptions, the description of the high conservation value should include measures of forest quality to be maintained or enhanced. The questions below	Not Applicable.						

	can be sustained. While there is a size threshold in considering intact forests (#7 above), there is no minimum size threshold when considering remnant intact forests.		provide guidance to help identify some of the potential qualities. - Does the remnant intact forest include suitable habitat for native species (e.g., range of habitats and ecosystems) or more natural forests in terms of structure and function? - Does the remnant include an appropriate proportion of climax species (i.e. not dominated by pioneer species)? - Does the remnant include a relatively high proportion of late seral stands? - Does the remnant include an appropriate proportion of structural features such as woody debris and standing dead trees (i.e., structurally complex)? - Is the level of dissection and perforation in the remnant below levels that will permit the persistence of most native species? - Are levels of early seral forest from human disturbances below levels appropriate for a naturally functioning landscape? - Are levels of habitat modification from human activity below levels appropriate for a naturally functioning landscape?							

Category 3) Forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems									
9. Does the forest contain naturally rare ecosystem types ?	These forests contain many unique species and communities that are adapted only to the conditions found in these rare forest types.	Local information source is the OMNRF's Forest Resource Inventory and the Natural Resources and Values Information System (NRVIS).	- Are there ecosystems that have been officially classified as being rare, threatened or endangered by a relevant national or international organization? (GUIDANCE) - Is a significant amount of the global extent of these ecosystems present in the country and/or ecoregion? (GUIDANCE) - Are these ecosystems heavily modified? (GUIDANCE) - Are these ecosystems potentially negatively impacted by forest management? (GUIDANCE)	None Identified						
10. Are there ecosystem types within the forest or ecoregion that have significantly declined?	This indicator includes rare forest ecosystem types (e.g. Carolinian forest, Savana Oak)	Local information source is the OMNRF's Forest Resource Inventory and the Natural Resources and Values Information System (NRVIS).	- Is the forest within an ecoregion with little remaining original forest type? (GUIDANCE) - Is there a significant proportion of the declining ecosystem type within the management unit in comparison to the broader ecoregion? (GUIDANCE) - Does potential vegetation mapping identify areas within the management unit that can support the declining ecosystem type (i.e., regeneration potential)? (GUIDANCE) - How well is each ecosystem effectively secured by the protected area network and the national/regional legislation? (GUIDANCE)	None Identified						

11. Are there sites with unique or exceptional ecological characteristics??	Sites with exceptional characteristics (e.g. ancient trees) warrant special consideration so that the conditions that produced these exceptional characteristics may continue to do so.	Local information source is the OMNRF's Forest Resource Inventory and the Natural Resources and Values Information System (NRVIS).	- Are there sites with unique or exceptional ecological characteristics? (GUIDANCE) - Are there important and/or unique geological areas that strongly influence vegetation cover (e.g., serpentine soils, marble outcrops)? (GUIDANCE) - Are there important and/or unique microclimatic conditions that strongly influence vegetation cover (e.g., high rainfall, protected valleys)? (GUIDANCE)	None Identified						

Category 4) Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g., watershed protection, erosion control)									
12. Does the forest provide a significant source of drinking water?	Where surface water is used to supply drinking water for communities special considerations are warranted		Is there a sole available and accessible source of drinking water for a community? (DEFINITIVE) - Are there watershed or catchment management studies that identify significant recharge areas that have a high likelihood of affecting drinking water supplies? (GUIDANCE)	Not Applicable					
13. Are there forests that provide a significant ecological service in mediating flooding and/or drought, controlling stream flow regulation, and water quality?	Most or all forests have some role to play in maintaining water quantity or quality, which is addressed in Criterion 6. This question is meant to identify those areas that are particularly sensitive.	Hydrological maps; Hydrologists in government departments or local research institutions. Provincially Significant Wetlands are mapped in the OMNRF's Natural Resources and Values Information System (NRVIS).	- Are there high risk areas for flooding or drought? (DEFINITIVE) - Are there particular forest areas (i.e., a critical sub-watershed) that potentially affect a significant or major portion of the water flow (e.g., 75% of water in a larger watershed is funneled through a specific catchment area or river channel)? (GUIDANCE) - Does the forest occur within a sub-watershed that is critically important to the overall catchment basin? (GUIDANCE) - Are there particular forest areas (i.e., a critical sub-watershed) that potentially affect water supplies for other services such as reservoirs, irrigation, river recharge or hydroelectric schemes? (GUIDANCE)	Drummond 1	Provincially Significant Wetland: Black Creek Wetland	NA	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20 Recreation Use Policy: Designated Use Restrictions	Recreation property, commercial forestry limited. OMNR responsible for assessment of PSWs.	22.7
				Lanark 5/6	Provincially Significant Wetland: Clayton-Taylor Complex	Red Pine Harvest 2018	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20	No operations planned in vicinity of PSW. OMNR responsible for assessment of PSWs.	32.8
				Pakenham 1/2	Provincially Significant Wetland: Pakenham Mountain Wetland Complex	N/A	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20 Recreation Use Policy: Designated Use Restrictions	Recreation property, commercial forestry limited. OMNR responsible for assessment of PSWs.	92.1

				South Sherbrooke 3	Provincially Significant Wetland: Bolton Creek Wetland	Red Pine Harvest 2016	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20	No operations planned in vicinity of PSW. OMNR responsible for assessment of PSWs.	14.9
14. Are there forests critical to erosion control?	See Number 13.		- Are there forest areas where the degree of slope carries high risk of erosion, landslides and avalanches? (DEFINITIVE) - Are there soil and geology site types that are particularly prone to erosion and terrain instability? (GUIDANCE) - Is the spatial extent of erosion-prone or unstable terrain such that the forest is at high risk (also of cumulative impacts)? (GUIDANCE)	Not Applicable						

Category 5) Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g., subsistence, health)									
15. Is any local community making use of the forest for basic needs/ livelihoods? (Consider food, medicine, fodder, fuel, building and craft materials, water, income).	There is a distinction being made between the use by individuals (e.g.., traplines), whose interests are addressed in Principles 1-9, and where use of the forest is fundamental to the subsistence or health needs of local communities, in which case a HCVF designation may be warranted	Sources of information 1. Consultation with the communities themselves (including women, men and elders) is the most important way of collecting information. 2. Literature sources such as reports and papers, where available, can be very useful sources of information. 3. Knowledgeable people and organizations such as local community organizations and Tribal Councils, NGOs, or academic institutions. This type of group can often provide a quick introduction to the issues and provide support for further work. 4. Review of studies of traditional land use and non-timber use of the forest. Review of socio-economic profiles of communities.	- Is this the sole source of the value(s) for the local communities? (GUIDANCE) - Is there a significant impact to the local communities as a result of a reduced supply of these values? (GUIDANCE) - Are there values that, although they may be a small proportion of the basic needs, are nevertheless critical? (GUIDANCE)	Not Applicable						

Category 6) Forest areas critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities)										
16. Is the traditional cultural identity of the local community particularly tied to a specific forest area?	The difference between having *some significance* to cultural identity and being *critical* will often be a difficult line to draw and as with meeting basic needs, the way in which it is established will be very variable. However, some key points to consider are: - To be an HCV, the forest must be **critical** to the culture. - For FSC certification **all** identified values must be addressed even if they are not critical, but will be dealt with under other principles.	See above	- Do the communities consider that the forest is culturally significant? Possible indicators for cultural importance include: 1. Names for landscape features; 2. Stories about the forest; 3. Sacred or religious sites; 4. Historical associations; and, 5. amenity or aesthetic value. - Will changes to the forest potentially cause an irreversible change to the culture? (GUIDANCE) - Is the particular forest in question more valuable than other forests? (GUIDANCE)	Darling 6	Pioneer Cemetery	Red Pine Harvest 2015	Community Forest WG*	Management Plan: Table 20	No operations planned adjacent to graveyard. Ongoing monitoring and maintenance of site carried out by Forest Manager. .	0.4

				Lavant 1-25	Unique forest with component of large canoe quality white birch.	Canoe White Birch Harvested by Alg FN in 2020. Forest Harvest 2021-22	Algonquins	Forest Management Plan	Forest Manager worked with Algonquin FN to harvest canoe bark. Damage to residual white birch to be monitored by Forest Manager.	30.3
17. Is there a significant overlap of values (ecological and/or cultural) that individually did not meet HCV thresholds, but collectively constitute HCVs?	Consideration of several spatially overlapping values is important in optimizing conservation management.	Local information source is the OMNRF's Forest Resource Inventory and the Natural Resources and Values Information System (NRVIS).	- Are there several overlapping conservation values? (GUIDANCE) - Do the overlapping values represent multiple themes (e.g., species distribution, significant habitat, concentration area, relatively unfragmented landscape)? (GUIDANCE)	Pakenham 1, 2	PSW, Locally significant area of second growth white pine forest, bedrock outcrops, and wetlands. High potential SAR habitat.	NA	Community Forest WG*	Recreation Use Policy: Designated Use Restrictions	Recreation property, commercial forestry limited.	276.1 Ha (Total Area 368.2 ha less 92.1 Ha PSW)

*Community Forest Working Group	- Lanark County Forest Manager - Lanark County Council (2) - Environment - Forest Industry - Private Landowner - MVC Forest Manager - OMNR		Total by Category				1) 2) 3) 4) 5) 6)	315.6 ha 0 0 162.5 ha 0 306.8 ha	Total HCV	784.9