



Draft Huron County Natural Heritage Plan

Current Approach to Natural Environment Planning and Recommended Updates

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

What is the Huron Natural Heritage Plan about?

The Huron County countryside supports a variety of land use activities, with agriculture being prominent. Natural areas provide important services that help make Huron County a productive area for farming and a great place to live. Forests prevent soil erosion, wetlands filter our water.

The Huron Natural Heritage Plan (NHP) is a summary of Huron's current approach to natural environment planning and contains recommendations for updates. A supporting document, known as the Technical Document, defines what is considered significant ecologically (woodlots, wetlands, meadows and shrub thickets), and maps these areas.

Is the Natural Heritage Plan a new approach to protecting natural environment areas in Huron County?

No. With our increased understanding of the location and significance of the County's natural heritage features from the Technical Document, the Plan summarizes existing land use policies and stewardship programs and makes recommendations for updates to:

- Ensure the County and local municipal planning documents are consistent with the provincial direction for protecting natural heritage features;
- Develop priorities for land stewardship programs; and
- Support sustainable economic development.

Why is the term “Natural Heritage” used instead of “Natural Environment”? Natural Heritage sounds like heritage buildings.

“Natural Heritage” and “Natural Environment” are used interchangeably in the Natural Heritage Plan to refer to natural areas. This is because the Huron NHP is informed by the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), and the PPS refers to “Natural Heritage” when referring to natural environment areas.

What are “adjacent lands”? I have heard about a restricted area that is 50 metres from a woodlot and 120 metres from a provincially significant wetland. What does this mean?

‘Adjacent lands’ refers to the area beside significant natural environment features. County Council has directed that adjacent lands be defined in the Official Plans as 50 metres from significant natural environment areas and 120 metres from provincially significant wetlands.

In the adjacent lands, when a building (such as a new barn) is proposed, the impacts on the natural environment must be assessed. This can often be completed through a site visit. In some cases, an Environmental Impact Study may be required.

Can I continue to crop within 50 metres of my woodlot or 120 metres from a provincially significant wetland on my farm?

Yes, cropping can continue in these areas.

How can I find out more?

The draft Natural Heritage Plan is on the Huron County website for your review and comment:

<https://www.huroncounty.ca/plandev/huron-natural-heritage-plan/>