



Port Hawkesbury Paper
Woodlands

High Conservation Value Forest Assessment

Summary Report 2023-2028



What is a HCV?

The High Conservation Value (HCV) framework was first developed by Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) International in 1999. Forests are given this designation by FSC certified companies that meet specific criteria outlined by FSC Principles and Criteria. There are six recognized categories of High Conservation Values.



The Six Categories of HCV

- HCV 1** Species diversity: Concentrations of biological diversity including endemic species, and rare, threatened or endangered species that are significant at global, national or regional levels.
- HCV 2** Landscape-level ecosystems and mosaics: Intact Forest Landscapes and large landscape-level ecosystems and ecosystem mosaics that are significant at global, national or regional levels, and that contain viable populations of the great majority of the naturally occurring species in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.
- HCV 3** Ecosystems and habitats: Rare, threatened, or endangered ecosystems, habitats or refugia.
- HCV 4** Critical ecosystem services: Basic ecosystem services in critical situations, including protection of water catchments and control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes.
- HCV 5** Community needs: Sites and resources fundamental to satisfying the necessities of local communities or Indigenous Peoples (for livelihood, health, nutrition, water, etc.), identified through engagement with these communities or Indigenous Peoples.
- HCV 6** Cultural values: Sites, resources, habitats and landscapes of global or national cultural, archaeological or historical significance, and/or of critical cultural, ecological, economic or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of local communities or Indigenous Peoples, identified through engagement with these local communities or Indigenous Peoples.

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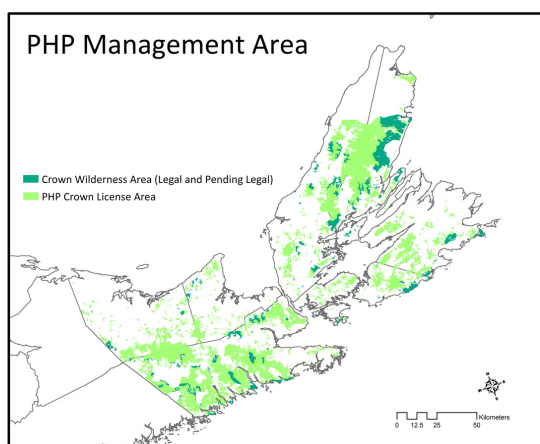


Endangered Canada Warbler HCV, National Audubon Society©

ABOUT OUR ASSESSMENT

An HCV (High Conservation Value) assessment was carried out in 2007-08 as per Principle 9 of the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) Standard. Since then, it has undergone two updates to ensure its continued relevance. Now, a new review and update has been conducted for the 2023 to 2028 certification period to the FSC National Forest Stewardship Standard. This was necessary to capture new HCV's and verify that the original HCV's are still relevant for the next five-year period.

OVERVIEW



Forests classified as High Conservation Value Forests (HCVFs) contain significant environmental and social values. These values may include, but are not limited to, unique biodiversity, watershed protection, soil stabilization, or an archaeological site. In cases where these values are deemed of critical importance or high significance, a forest may be identified as an HCVF.



Endangered Black Ash HCV in Cape Breton

Our objective is to ensure the sustainability of HCV's while practicing responsible forest management.

All forests contain some ecological or social value(s) that are important for biological processes or human needs. Examples of forest values are rare species habitat, recreational sites, or old growth forests. A forest can be defined as a HCV if the values within are considered to be of outstanding significance or critical importance.

OUR ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- The process of assessing high conservation values on PHP lands involved the utilization of the 19 questions in the HCV Assessment Framework, as provided in the FSC Standard. Further guidance was drawn from HCV Network Toolkits and World Wildlife Fund Canada's HCV Support Document to supplement this process.
- The original assessment, completed by the HCVF Design Committee in 2007-08, comprised representatives from the company, environmental organizations, government, and academia. A subsequent assessment and update by the HCVF Design Committee was completed in 2015. Internal reviews and updates are conducted by the company as needed or every five years.
- To ensure accuracy, Port Hawkesbury Paper's HCV Assessment has undergone peer review by third-party experts, identifying areas for improvement and corrective actions. Through extensive use of GIS data, policies, procedures, and guidelines, high conservation values, management strategies, and monitoring activities have been identified for Port Hawkesbury Paper's Crown license area.

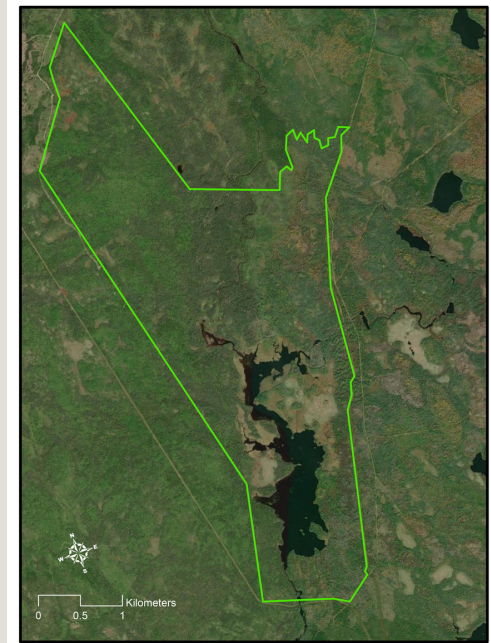
An HCV is a biological, ecological, social, or cultural value of outstanding significance or critical importance.

HCV'S IDENTIFIED IN OUR MANAGEMENT AREA

HCV Category 1 Species Diversity	HCV Value
<p>Question 1: Species at Risk</p>	<p>American Marten Bicknell's Thrush Black Ash Black-foam Lichen Boreal Felt Lichen Blue Felt Lichen Canada Lynx Canada Warbler Chimney Swift Common Nighthawk Eastern Whip-poor-will Eastern Wood Pewee Eastern White Cedar Evening Grosbeak Frosted Glass-whiskers Lichen Little Brown Myotis Mainland Moose New Jersey Rush Northern Myotis Olive-sided Flycatcher Roseate Tern Rusty Blackbird Tri-colored Bat Vole Ears Lichen Wood Thrush Wood Turtle Wrinkled Shingle Lichen</p> <div data-bbox="1016 457 1495 1073" data-label="Figure"> </div>
<p>Question 2: Endemic Species</p>	<p>Atlantic Coastal Plain Flora</p>
<p>Question 3: Seasonal Concentration of Species</p>	<p>PHP Watersheds Cold-water Streams for Salmon and Trout</p>
<p>Question 4: Regional Significant Species</p>	<p>Natural Red Spruce Stands White Elm Red Oak Hemlock Black Ash Jack Pine Wood Turtle</p>

HCV'S IDENTIFIED IN OUR MANAGEMENT AREA

HCV Category 1 Species Diversity	HCV Value
Question 5: Species Concentration at Edge of Natural Range	None identified
Question 6: Legal or Proposed Protected or Conserved Area	New Provincial Protected Areas (pending legal status) Crown Wilderness Areas Provincial Parks and Reserves Provincial Nature Reserves National Migratory Bird Sanctuaries National Parks Indigenous Protected & Conserved Area Old-Growth Forests PHP Protected Areas International Biological Program Sites & Sites of Ecological Significance Special Management Zones Adjacent to Protected Areas
HCV Category 2 Large Landscape Level Forests	HCV Value
Question 7: Forest Landscapes for Native Species	Barren Hill Boisdale Hills Bornish Hills Country Harbour East Bay Hills French River Hill Lake Ingonish River Isaacs Harbour River Jim Campbells Barren Masons Mountain North River Oban Petit Lake Ruiss Noir Salmon Gaspereaux Upper Liscomb River



Isaacs Harbour River Large Landscape Level Forest HCV, Guysborough County

HCV'S IDENTIFIED IN OUR MANAGEMENT AREA

HCV Category 3 Rare, Threatened or Endangered Ecosystems	HCV Value
Question 8: Naturally Rare Ecosystems	Significant Ecosites Database Nature Conservancy's Critical Occurrences
Question 9: Ecosystems under Present and/or Future Decline	Old-Growth Forests
Question 10: Ecosystems Poorly Represented in Protected Areas	Conservation Area Network Gap Analysis Results
Question 11: Rare or Absent Large Landscape Level Forests	See Category 2 - Large Landscape Level Forests Connectivity Management Zones
Question 12: Unique Aquatic Ecosystems	St. Mary's River Watershed Margaree River Watershed
HCV Category 4 Basic Services of Nature	HCV Value
Question 13: Water Flows for Social & Economic Activities	Legally Protected Municipal Water Supply Areas Water Supply Intake Points PHP Watersheds
Question 14: Significant Forests Providing Aquatic Ecological Services	Legally Protected Municipal Water Supply Areas Water Supply intake Points PHP Watersheds Wetlands of Special Significance

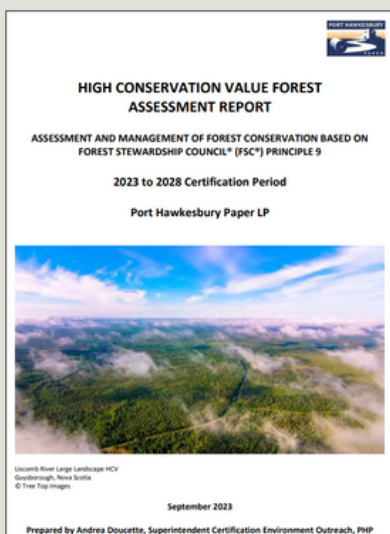


**St. Mary's River Watershed HCV
Antigonish County**

HCV'S IDENTIFIED IN OUR MANAGEMENT AREA

Question 15: Forests Critical to Erosion Control	Steep Slope Areas
Question 16: Interface Forests for Fire Protection	None Identified
HCV Category 5 Basic Needs of Local Communities	HCV Value
Question 17: Basic Needs/Livelihoods of Local Communities	Cape Breton Moose Population Cold-water Streams for Salmon and Trout Cattle Grazing on Cape Breton Highlands Viewscapes Margaree and St. Mary's Watersheds for Salmon Fishing Third-party Use Requests
HCV Category 6 Traditional Cultural Identity	HCV Value
Question 18: Forest Areas for Traditional Cultural Identity	Culturally Significant Plant Areas Mi'kmaq Archaeological/Cultural Scan Sites
Collective Overlap of High Conservation Values Question 19: Significant Overlap of Values	None Identified

To learn more about our HCV assessment and to access the full report, please click below.



Wetlands of Special Significance HCV

Annual monitoring reports are accessible here:
<https://www.porthawkesburypaper.com/reports-and-policies.html>