

An aerial photograph of a vast, dense forest of evergreen trees, likely spruce or fir, covering a hillside. The trees are a vibrant green color, and the perspective is from a high angle, looking down on the forest canopy.

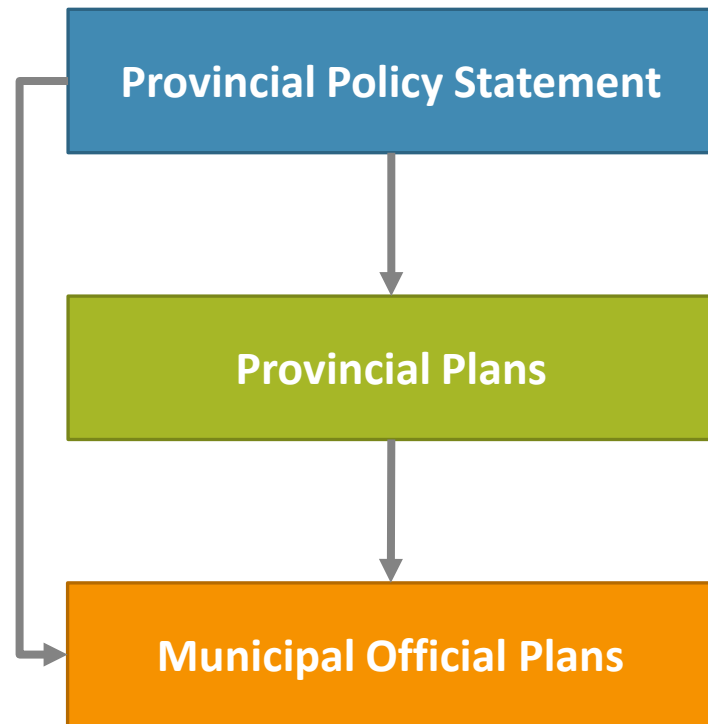
A BETTER WOODLAND SIZE CRITERIA

GOING BEYOND A TOTAL COVER APPROACH

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PROJECT CONTEXT



- Protects *significant natural heritage features and functions*
- Requires municipalities to identify an NHS*
- Acknowledges that size and form of NHS may differ

*Ecoregions
6E and 7E

- Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan
- Greenbelt Plan
- Niagara Escarpment Plan
- Growth Plan



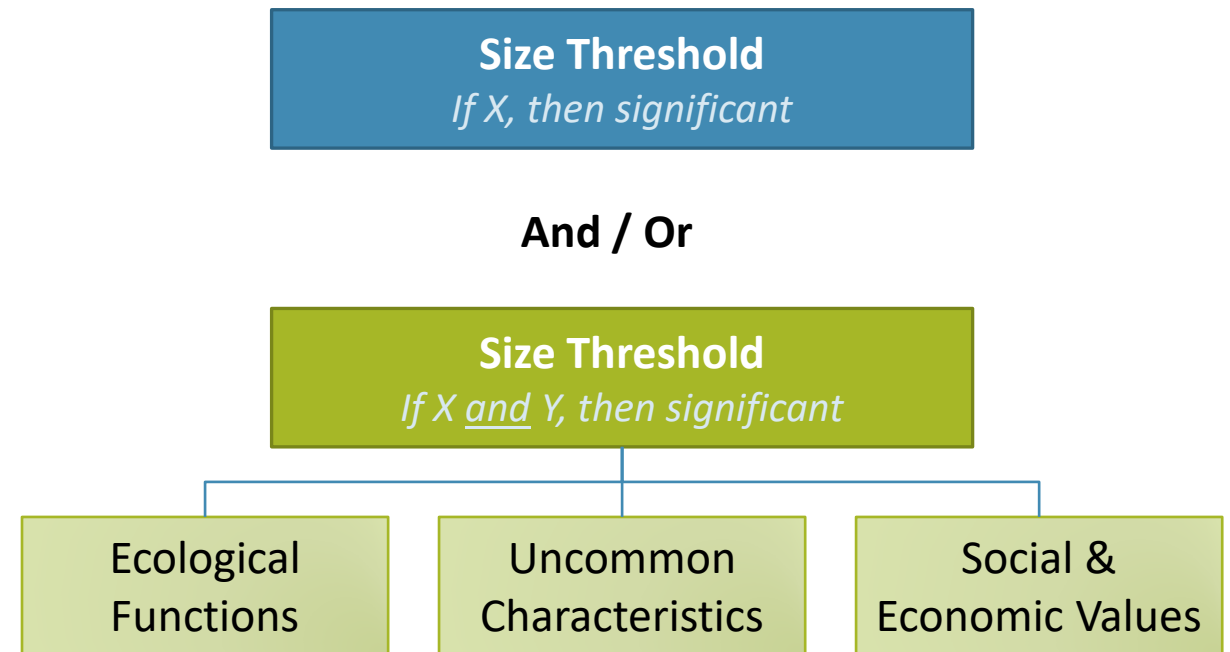
Criteria for Identifying
Significant Features

- Conformity with PPS, Provincial Plans
- Must identify an NHS*
- Opportunity to go beyond Provincial requirements
- Setting cover targets
- Implementation

- Lower significance threshold(s)
- Additional feature types / categories

SIZE AS A CRITERION

- Readily available data
- Easily mapped
- Serves to identify:
 - ‘Confirmed’ significance
 - ‘Candidate’ features
 - Regionally important features





TOTAL COVER APPROACH

UNDIFFERENTIATED

In Practice

- Jurisdictional area as assessment unit
- Selects a size threshold as a 'one-size-fits-all' approach

Benefits

- Very simple to apply
- Limited ecological expertise is required

In absence of other information, size criteria should be reduced (NHRM).

DIFFERENTIATED

In Practice

- Uses sub-units (e.g., urban vs. rural)
- Still uses a 'total woodland cover', but within sub-units

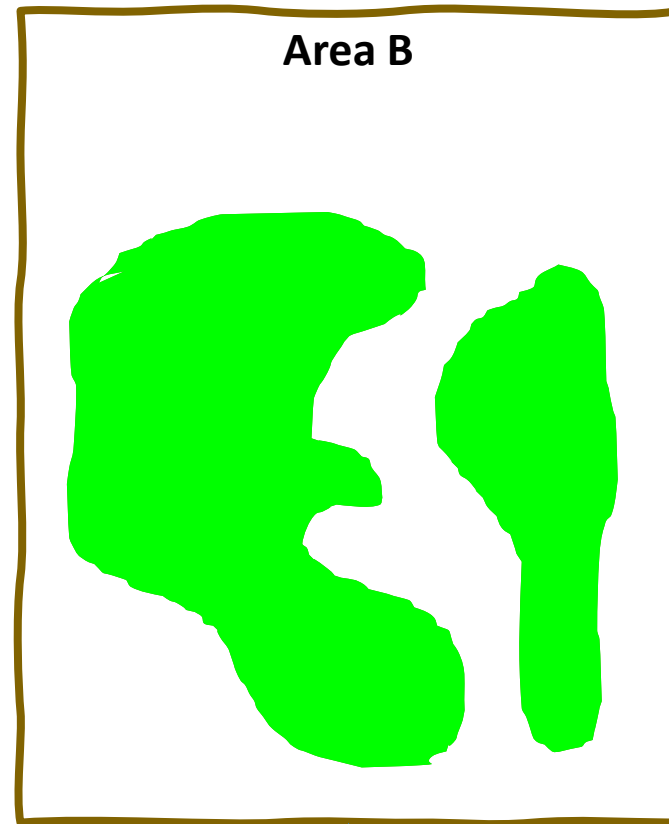
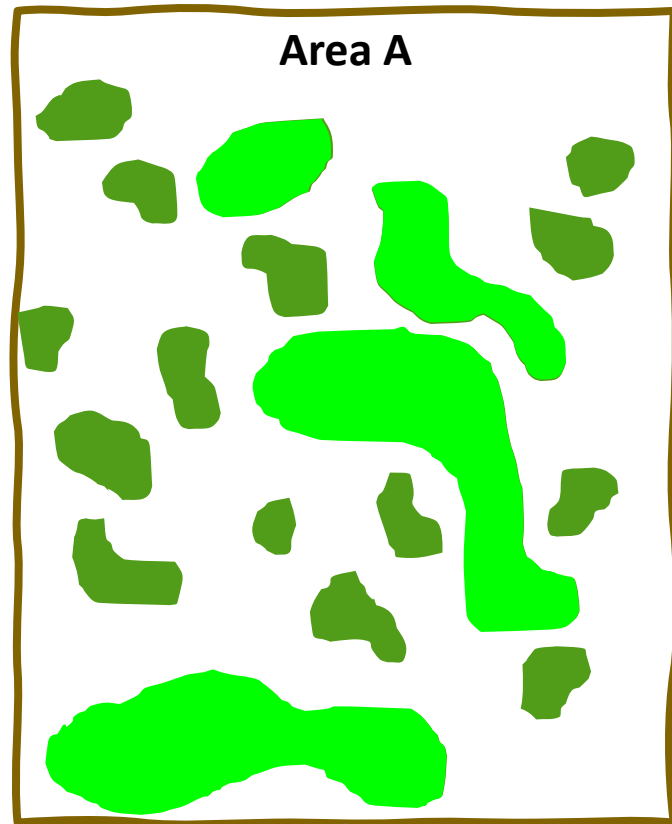
Benefits

- Supported by PPS (differences in NHS between urban and rural)
- Provides some refinement to better reflect landscape differences
- Still simple & easy to apply



LIMITATIONS OF TOTAL COVER

DOESN'T
REFLECT
VARIABILITY
IN HOW
TOTAL COVER
OCCURS ON
THE
LANDSCAPE

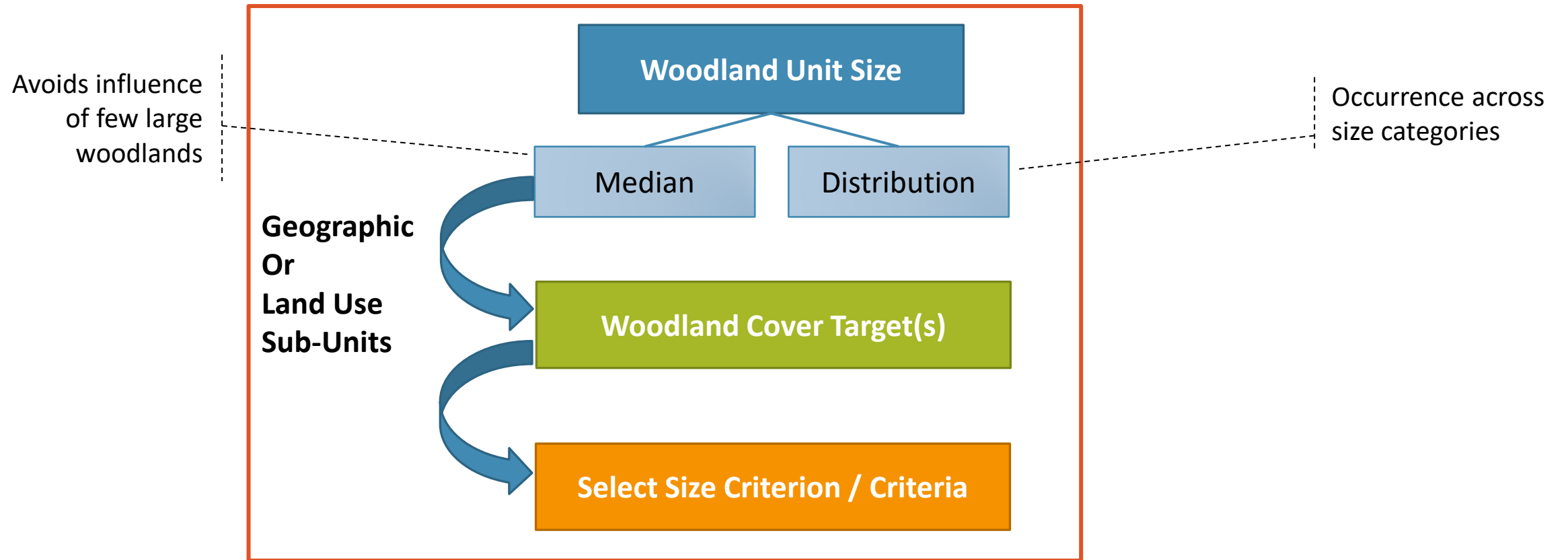


Intuitively,
should
these have
the same
size
threshold?

>4 ha



REPRESENTATIVE COVER APPROACH





BEYOND TOTAL COVER

Benefits

- Capture variability in size, distribution of woodlands
- Improved consideration of ecological implications of size threshold(s)
- Robust input to NHSS and policy development
- Supports implementation of targets
- Defensible

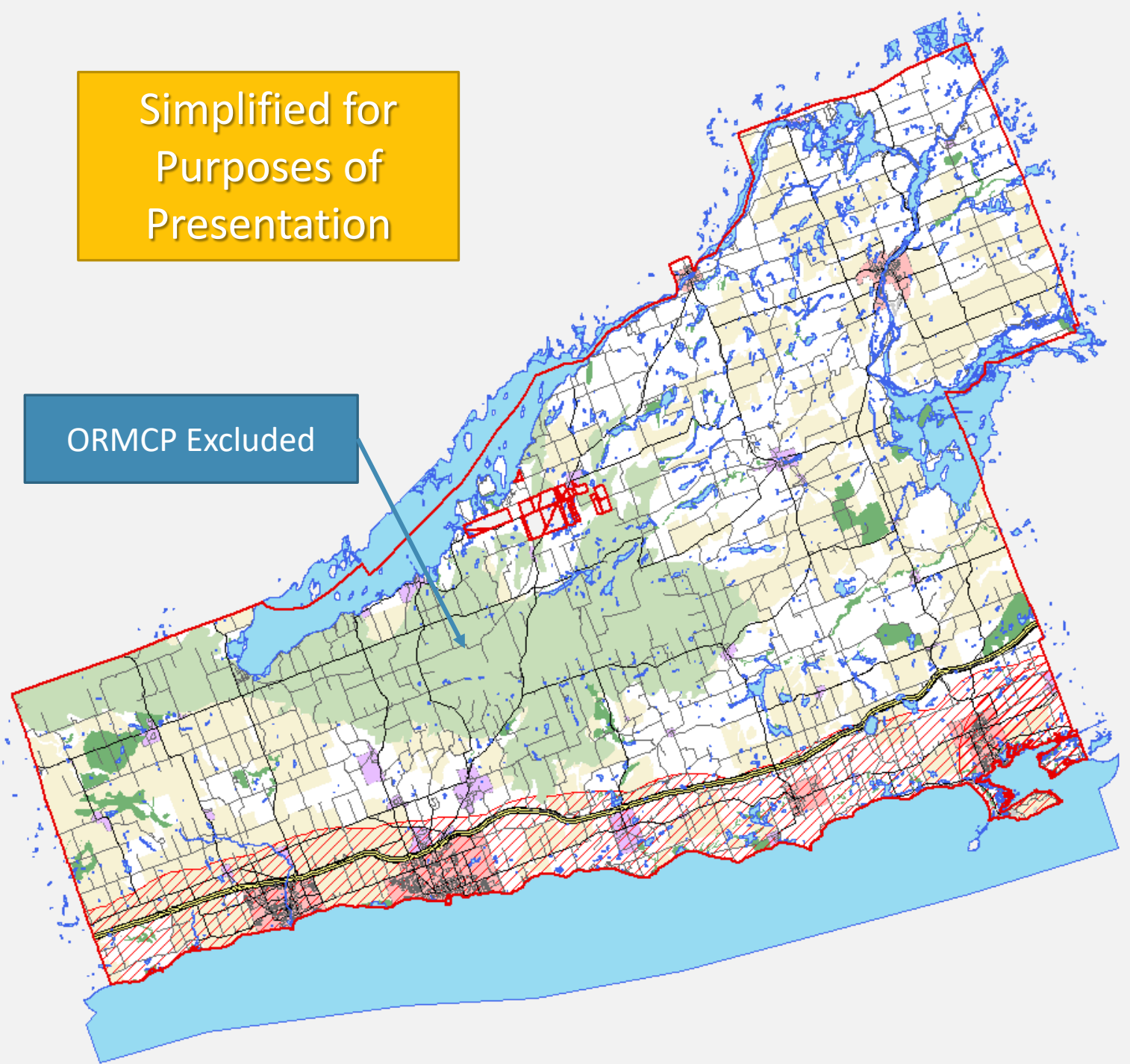
Considerations

- Size is only one criterion
- Potential planning, social & economic implications
- Going beyond *significant* woodland identification

CASE STUDY | NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY

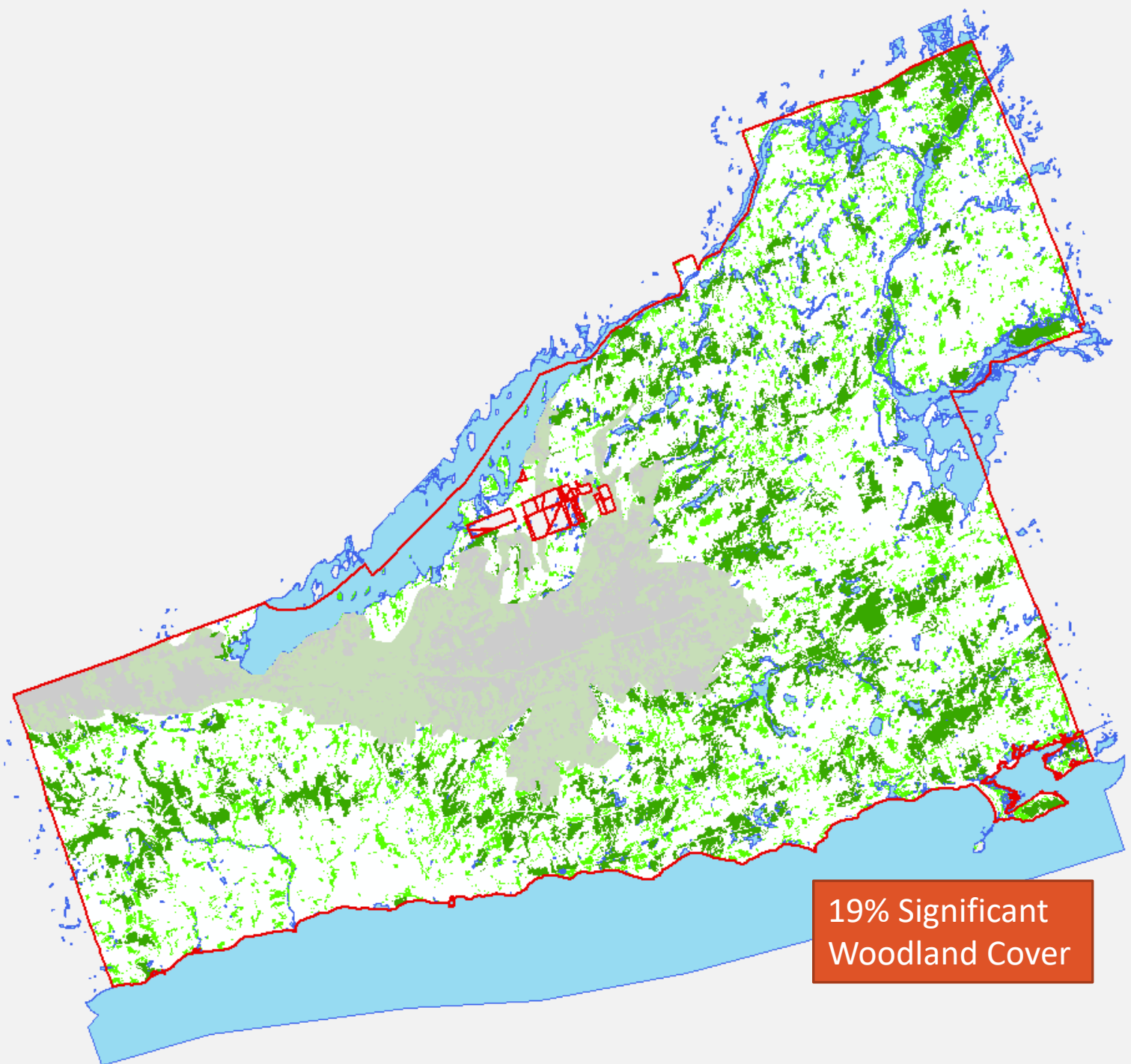
Simplified for
Purposes of
Presentation

ORMCP Excluded



NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY | NHRM SIGNIFICANCE UNDIFFERENTIATED

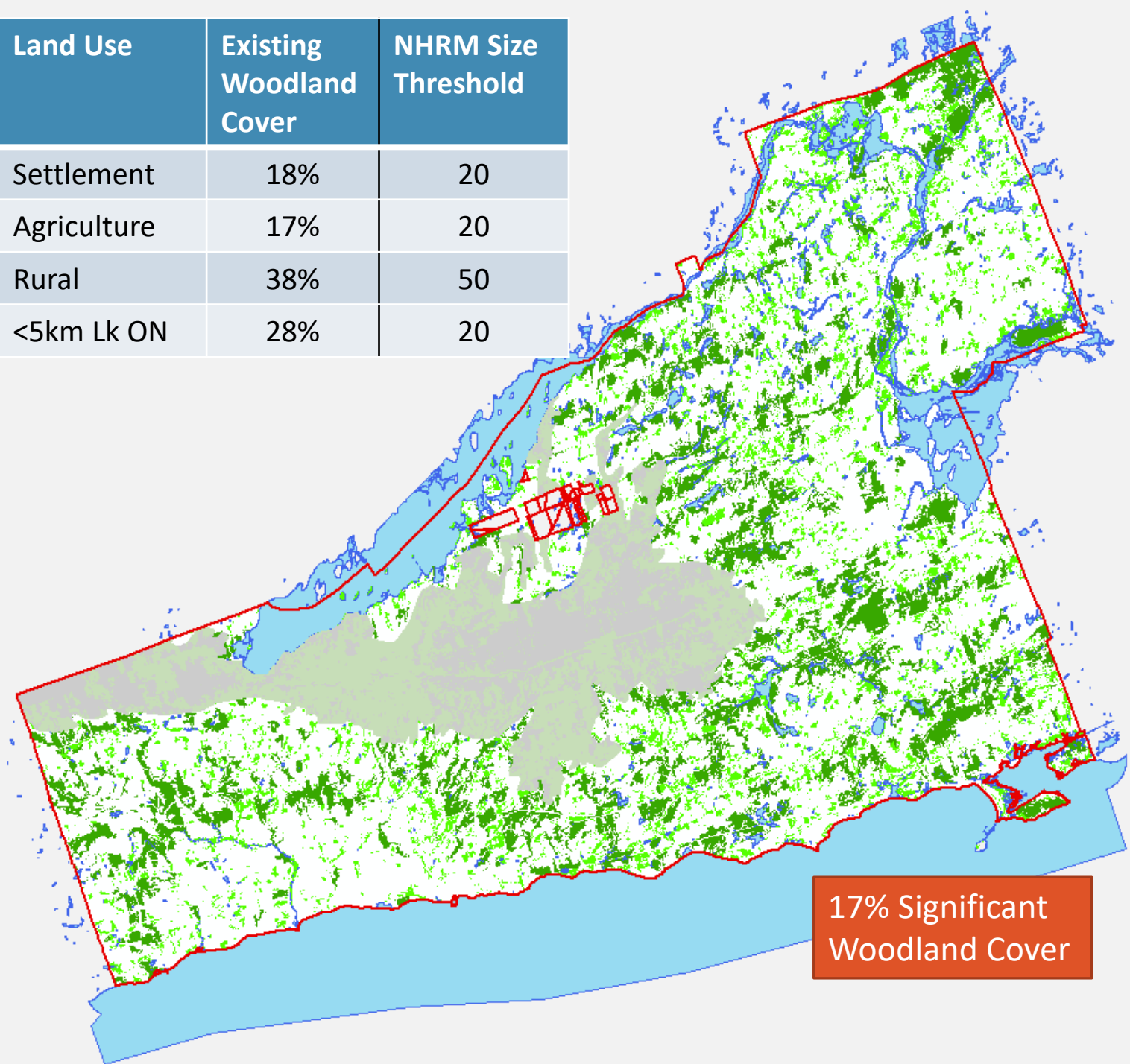
- 27.5% cover (ORM removed)
- 20 ha threshold
- 18.9% Significant
- 8.6% Undesignated



NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY | NHRM SIGNIFICANCE DIFFERENTIATED

Land Use	Existing Woodland Cover	NHRM Size Threshold
Settlement	18%	20
Agriculture	17%	20
Rural	38%	50
<5km Lk ON	28%	20

Land Use	Significant Woodland Cover	Undesignated Woodland Cover
Settlement	7%	11%
Agriculture	9%	8%
Rural	22%	16%
<5km Lk ON	20%	8%

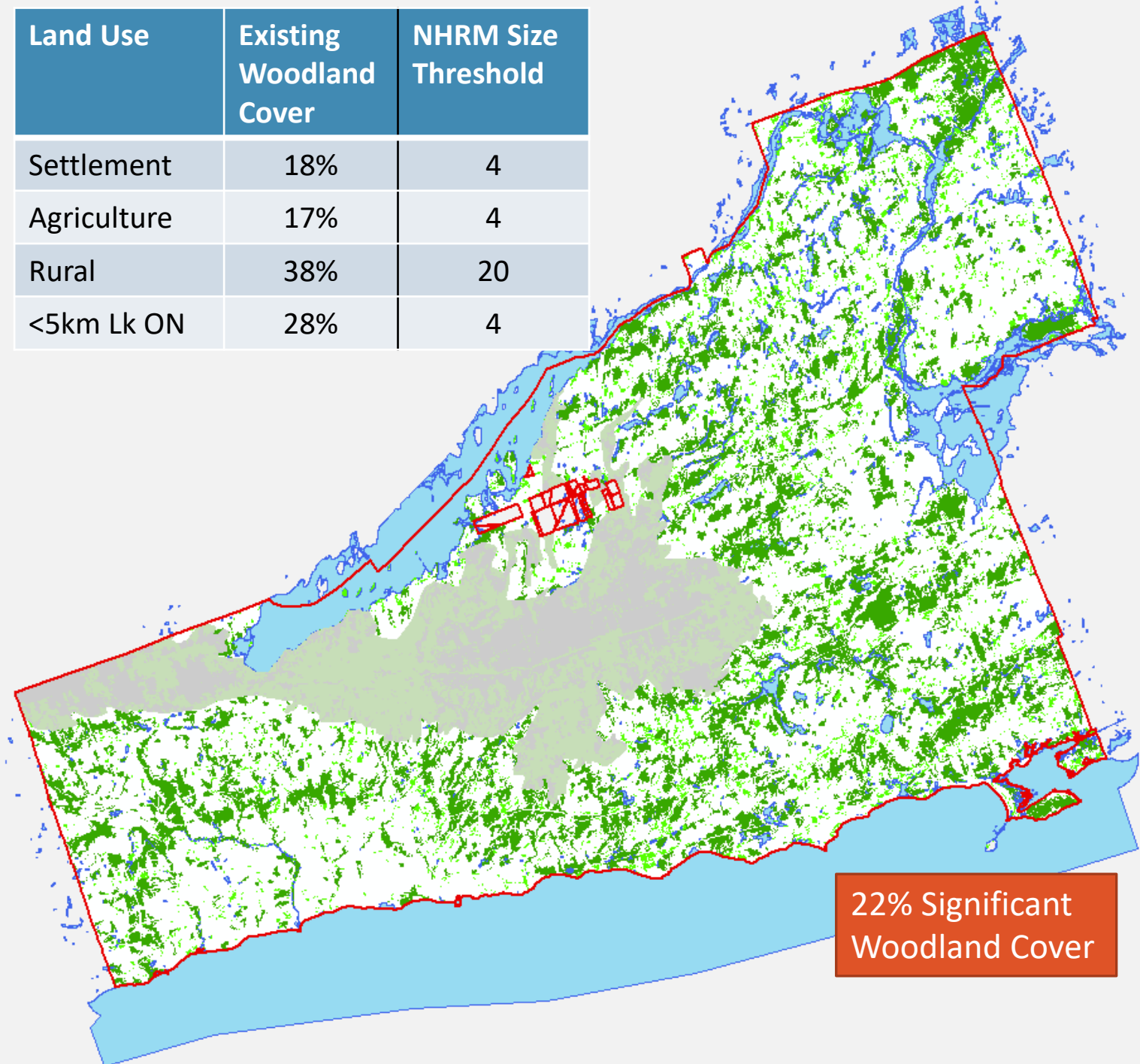


17% Significant Woodland Cover

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY | NHRM SIGNIFICANCE DIFFERENTIATED, REDUCED THRESHOLD

Land Use	Existing Woodland Cover	NHRM Size Threshold
Settlement	18%	4
Agriculture	17%	4
Rural	38%	20
<5km Lk ON	28%	4

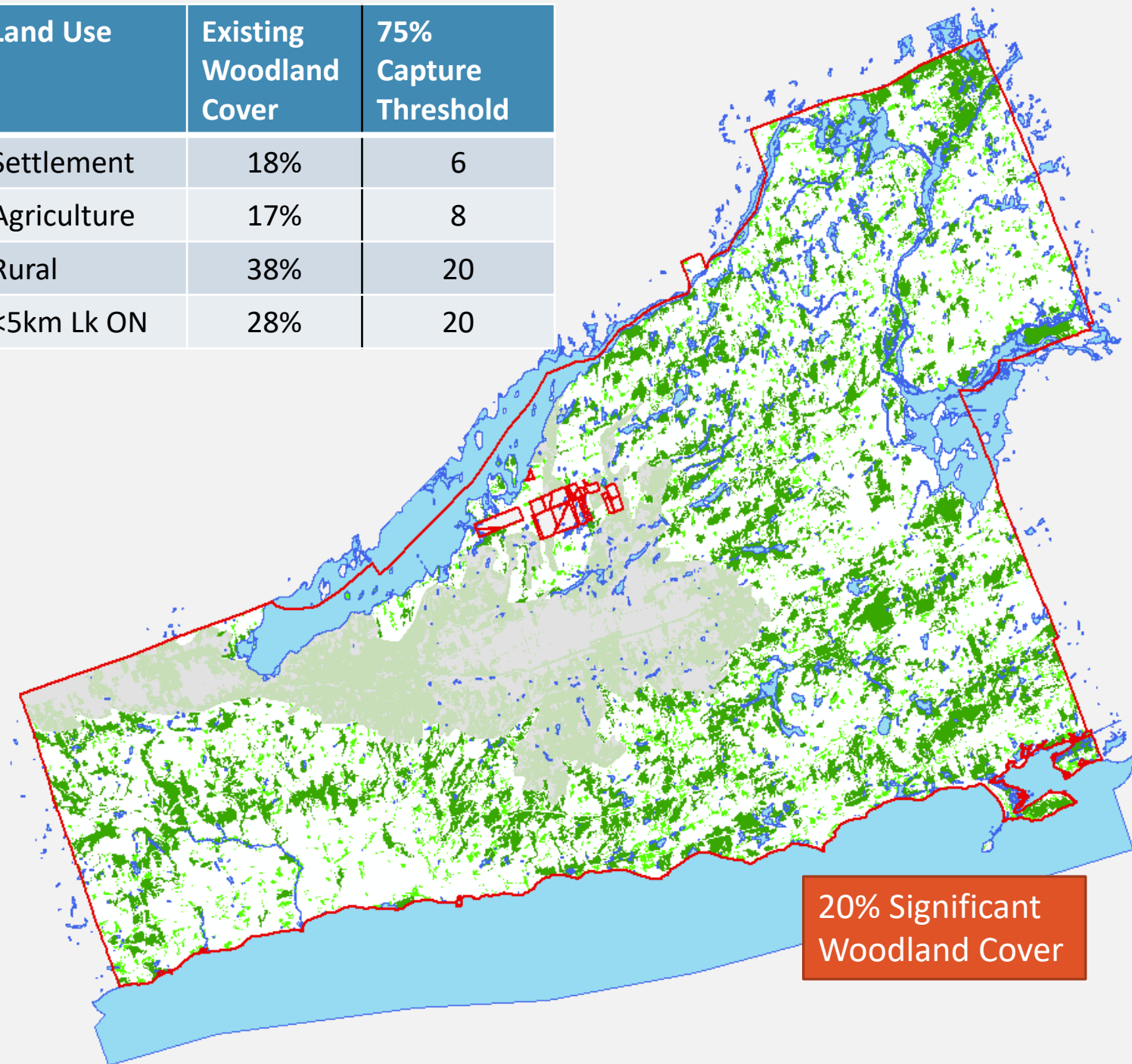
Land Use	Significant Woodland Cover	Undesignated Woodland Cover
Settlement	15%	3%
Agriculture	15%	2%
Rural	29%	9%
<5km Lk ON	26%	2%



NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY | REPRESENTATIVE COVER MODERATE CAPTURE TRESHOLD

Land Use	Existing Woodland Cover	75% Capture Threshold
Settlement	18%	6
Agriculture	17%	8
Rural	38%	20
<5km Lk ON	28%	20

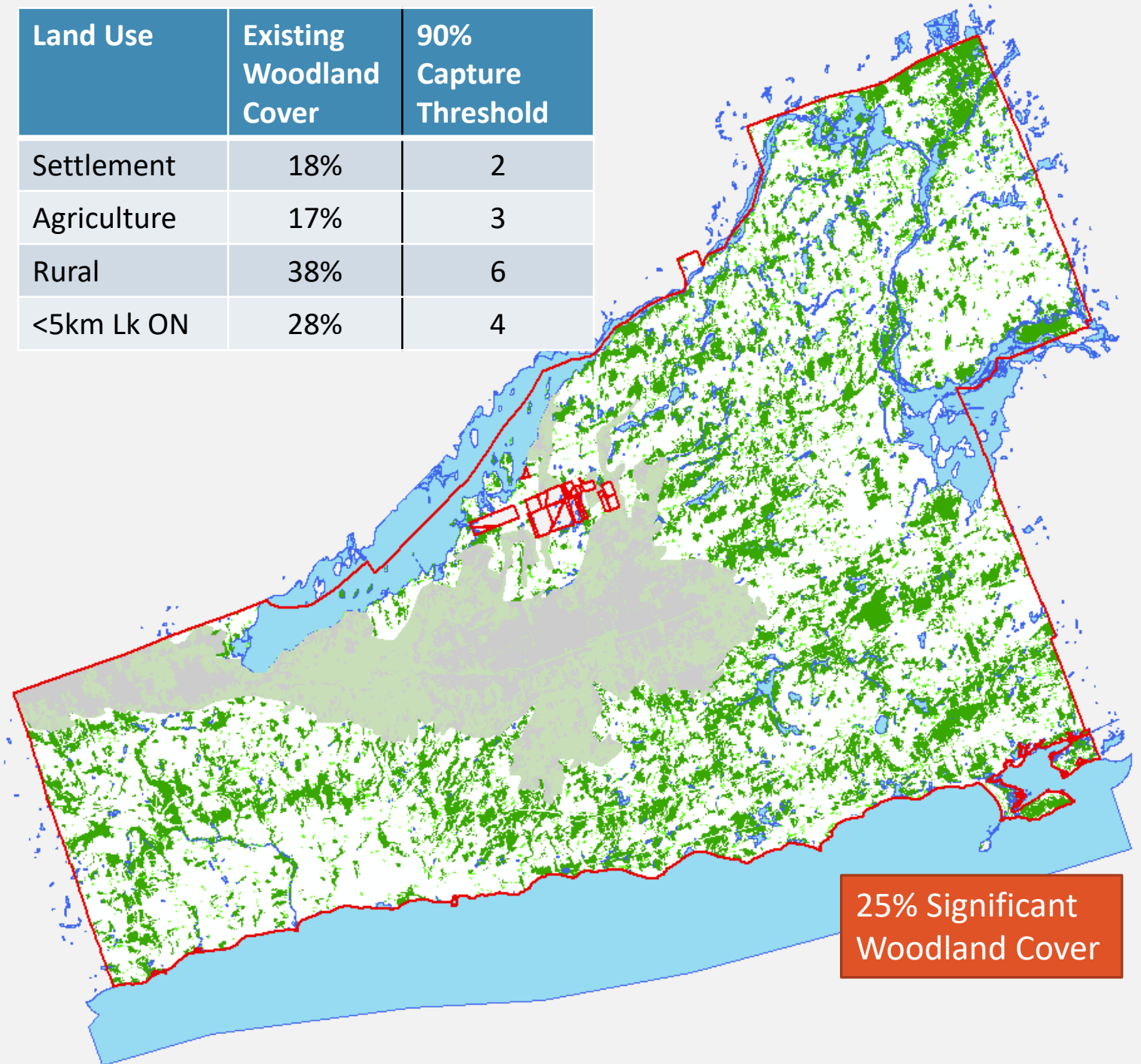
Land Use	Significant Woodland Cover	Undesignated Woodland Cover
Settlement	14%	4%
Agriculture	14%	3%
Rural	31%	7%
<5km Lk ON	20%	8%



NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY | REPRESENTATIVE COVER HIGH CAPTURE THRESHOLD

Land Use	Existing Woodland Cover	90% Capture Threshold
Settlement	18%	2
Agriculture	17%	3
Rural	38%	6
<5km Lk ON	28%	4

Land Use	Significant Woodland Cover	Undesignated Woodland Cover
Settlement	16%	2%
Agriculture	16%	1%
Rural	35%	3%
<5km Lk ON	26%	2%





WHY USE REPRESENTATIVE COVER?

- Reflects 'real' conditions
- High landscape variability
- Supported by readily available data
- Defensible
- Informs & supports targets
- Inform size criteria for:
 - Significant
 - Regionally / Locally important

Opportunity to use
existing conditions to
inform policy.

Thank You

Special
thanks
To:



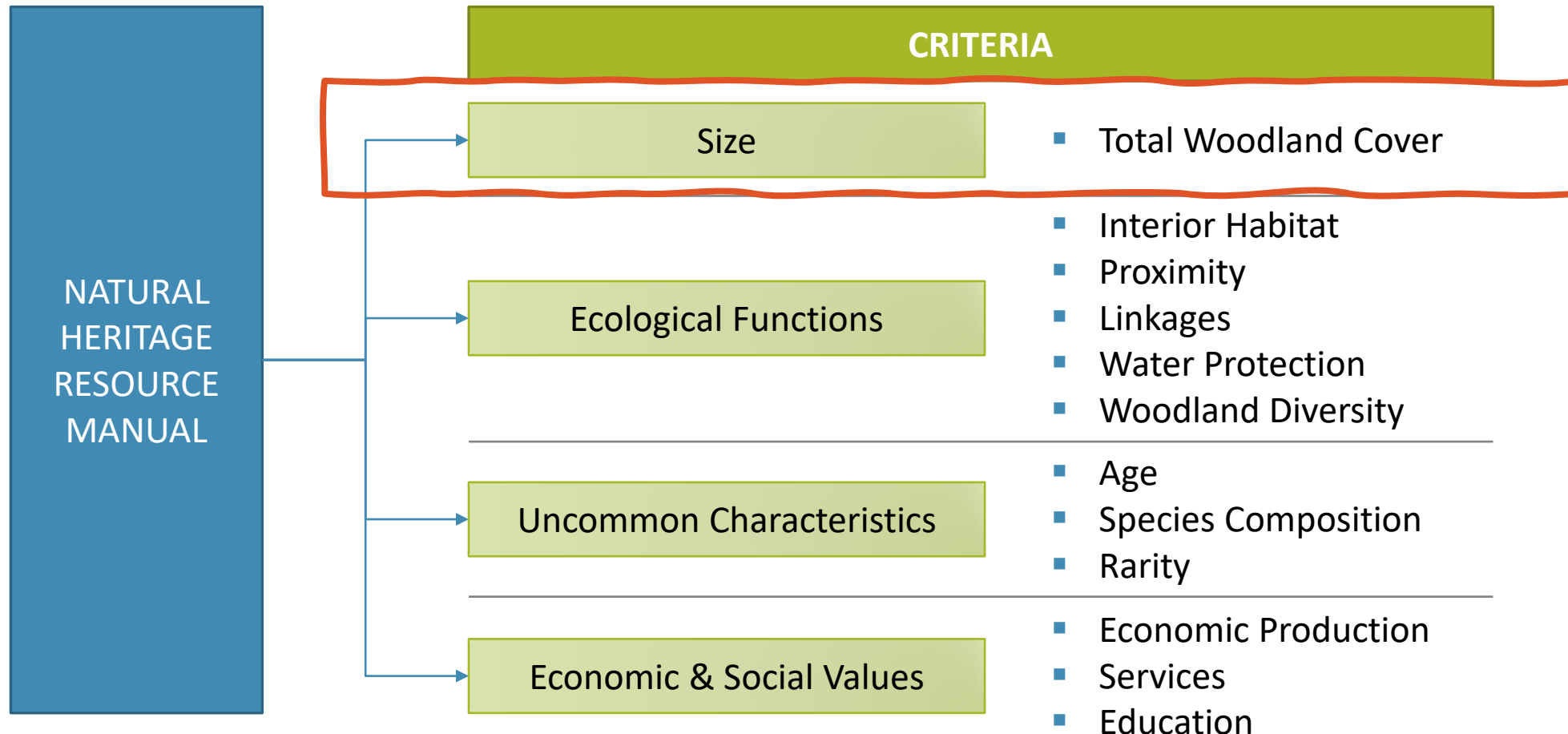
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DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE





WOODLAND COVER TARGETS

How Much Habitat is Enough?

- 30% Forest Cover - High Risk Scenario
- 40% Forest Cover - Moderate Risk Scenario
- 50% Forest Cover - Low Risk Scenario

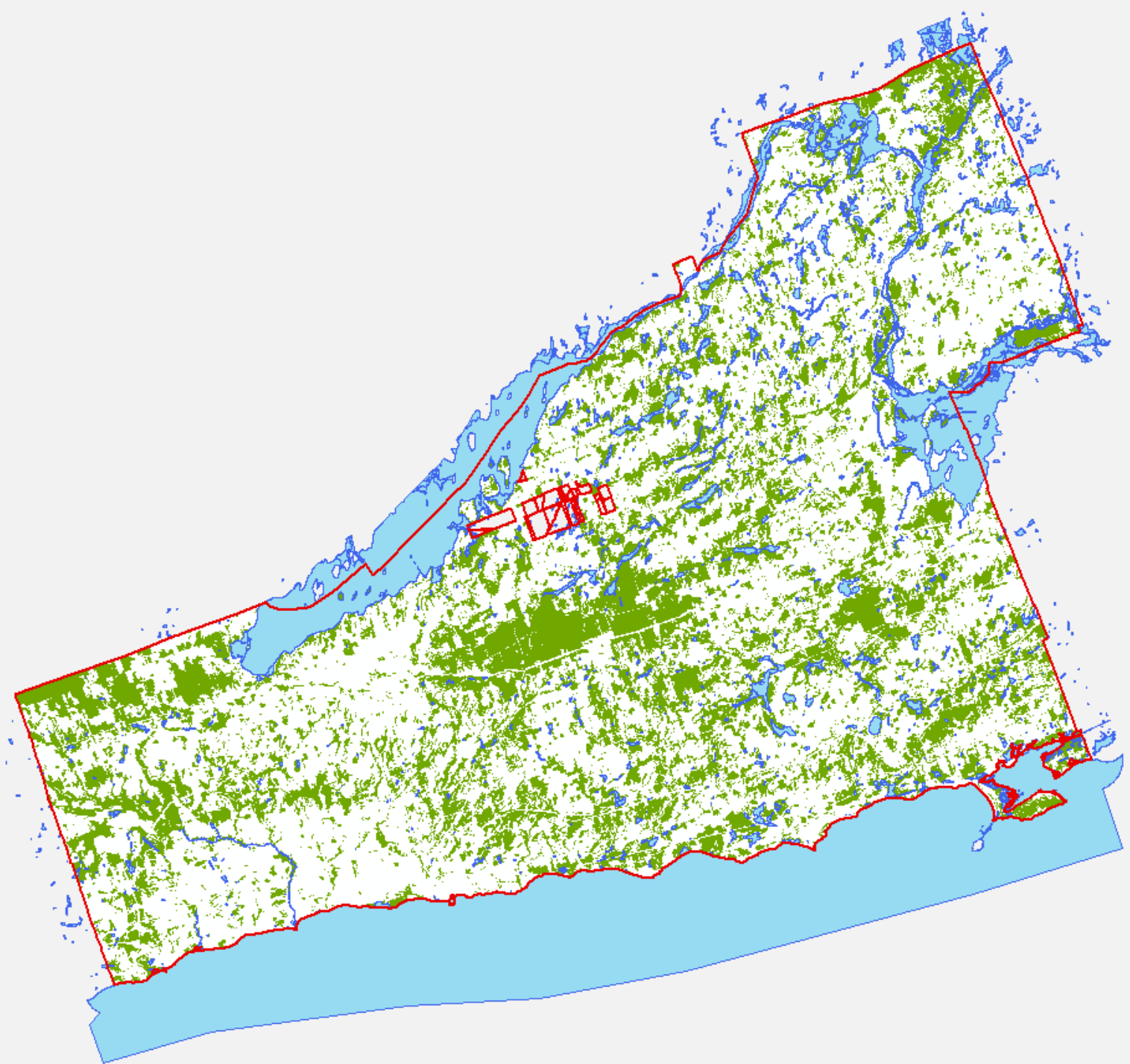


Achievable Targets

- Many municipalities in 6E and 7E unlikely to meet 30% target
- Maintain or enhance forest / woodland cover
 - Protection
 - Compensation
 - Restoration

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY | WOODLANDS

- Excluded 'woodlands' <0.5 ha
 - Hedgerows
 - Artifacts
 - ELC Threshold
- Reduces skew caused by the large number of these very small features





COMPARISON

- Fairly comparable outcomes:
 - NHRM by Land Use **and** Representative Cover – Moderate Capture (75%)
 - NHRM by Land Use Reduced **and** Representative Cover – High Capture (90%)
- Representative Cover approach provides refinement to common practice
- Better representation of existing conditions



IMPLEMENTATION

- Size Criterion Only
 - Lowered threshold
- Combining Size with other Criteria
 - Higher size-only criteria
 - Lower size-threshold when other criteria met
- Planning Context
 - Use restrictions
 - Policy implementation
 - Public support