

# Biodiversity Offsetting



## Challenges and Opportunities

Michael Wynia, MCIP, RPP

November 18, 2019

# What is it?

Replacing lost biodiversity features and functions after avoidance and mitigation options have been attempted or implemented.

Other associated terms include:

- Compensation
- No-net loss
- Net gain
- Overall benefit



## What are the Opportunities?

### Economic:

- engages developers;
- provides funding for conservation work;
- provides competitive advantage;
- facilitates growth and development.

### Environmental:

- possibility of net gain;
- adaptability and resiliency particularly in face of climate change.



Michael Wynia

## What are the Challenges/ Risks:

### Economic:

- Dependency;
- Inequity;
- Misappropriation;
- funding “shell-game”.

### Environmental:

- unexpected losses or uncertain gains;
- time lags;
- issues in measuring and assessing success;
- unexpected consequences and longer term impacts;
- inability to properly factor in climate change impacts.



Michael Wynia

# Key Principles

1. Mitigation hierarchy
2. Net gain vs. no net loss
3. Limits to offsetting
4. Establishing equivalence
5. Duration of offsets
6. Location
7. Conservation banking
8. Fully covering the costs of offsets
9. Engagement
10. Transparency



Michael Wynia

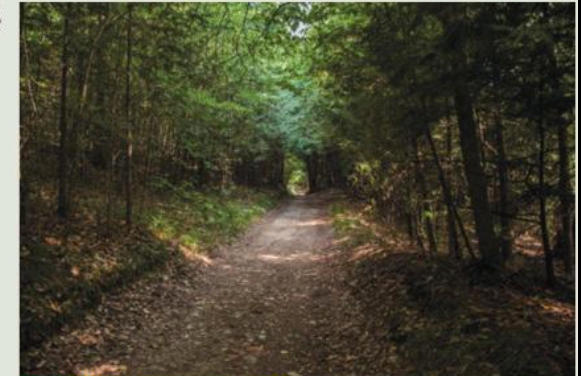
# Best Practices Guide to Natural Heritage Systems Planning



# 5

## SUCCESS STORIES OF THE YEAR

Each year, the Foundation participates in events, facilitates partnerships, breaks ground on new projects, and communicates with Ontarians across the province. Here are five of our greatest accomplishments this year.



### 1 Habitat & Conservation: Protection Through Planning

The Greenbelt's protected Natural Heritage System comprises 535,000 acres of lakes, wetlands, river valleys, and forests, and provides habitat for 78 species-at-risk.

Well-protected natural systems restore and enhance the resilience of our landscapes. This year, with our grantees, we took the right steps in ensuring the Greenbelt's natural legacy remains for years to come.

With our support, Ontario Nature produced the *Best Practices Guide to Natural Heritage Systems Planning* for municipal planners, a guide rich with examples from across southern and eastern Ontario.

After a year of careful planning and extensive public consultation with more than 200 community members, the Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association launched the *Conservation and Stewardship Plan for the Bruce Peninsula* with our support. One of the most ecologically significant regions in the Great Lakes area, the Bruce Peninsula is vital to the health of the Greenbelt's ecosystems and natural communities. It requires careful and coordinated stewardship. This robust plan outlines a strategy for the coming five years, featuring recommendations that involve every level of the community.

4 Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation  
Annual Report 2013/14

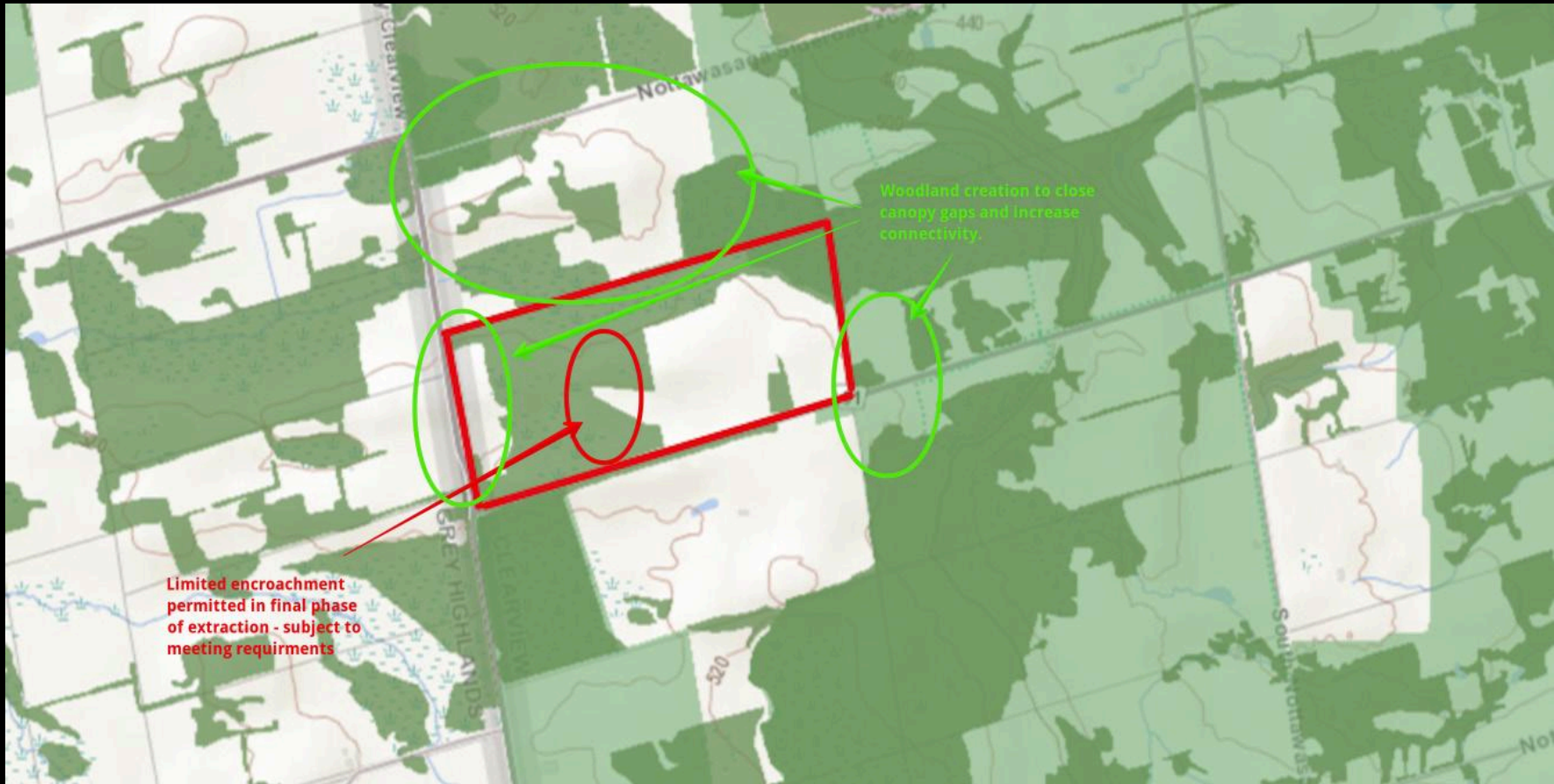


Ontario Nature's Greenway Guide Series

Offsetting can be a very useful tool in the management of natural heritage systems. It **can offer flexibility and responsiveness to changing conditions**. It can provide for **significant gains to the quantity and quality of the natural heritage system**. However, it is also potentially problematic in regard to effective implementation and achieving the ultimate objectives and goals of natural heritage system protection.







Woodland creation to close canopy gaps and increase connectivity.

Limited encroachment permitted in final phase of extraction - subject to meeting requirements



Michael Wynia

Extraction only permitted in last phase and only if conditions were met.

The loss of a portion of woodlands was authorized utilizing performance standards and a trigger.

Prior to actual removal the operator was required to demonstrate that offsetting forest creation efforts were succeeding through meeting specific performance measures regarding:

- tree growth;
- species diversification; and,
- other natural considerations.

Use of securities – assist in ensuring effective implementation.

The municipality was also provide with a ½ cent per tonne fund to facilitate tree planting throughout the township and a further ½ cent per tonne fund to assist in the acquisition of environmental lands.

This results in a very significant net gain.



Michael Wynia