

Figure 37). As previously discussed, the Project is located in an already fragmented area (white patches) and is not close to any high-density areas for pinch points.

FIGURE 36: KERNEL DENSITY MODEL OF POTENTIAL CORRIDORS ACROSS THE CHIGNECTO ISTHMUS REGION (FROM NUSSEY 2016)

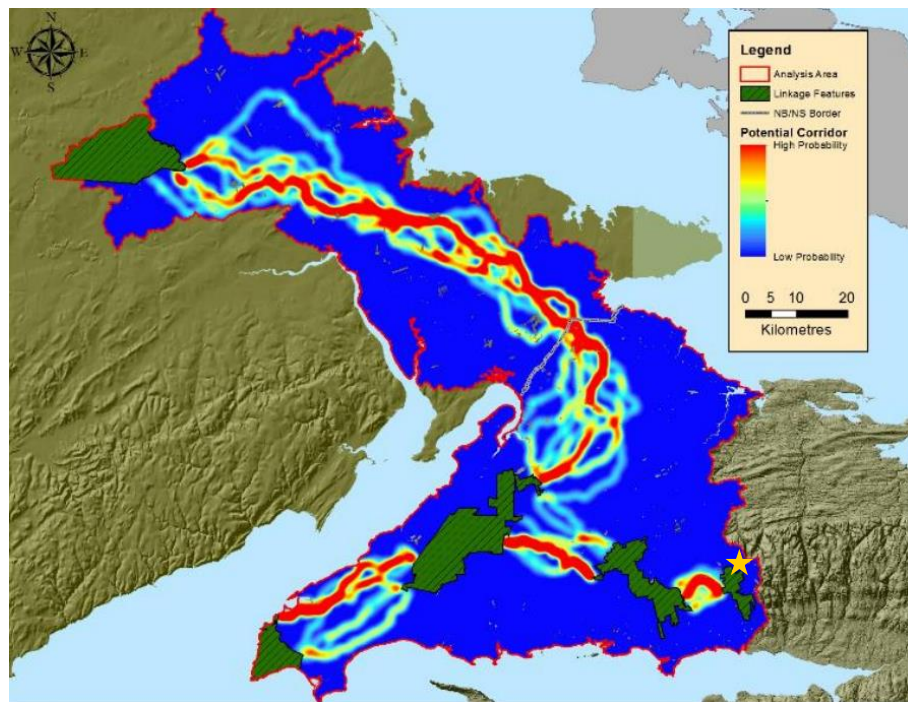
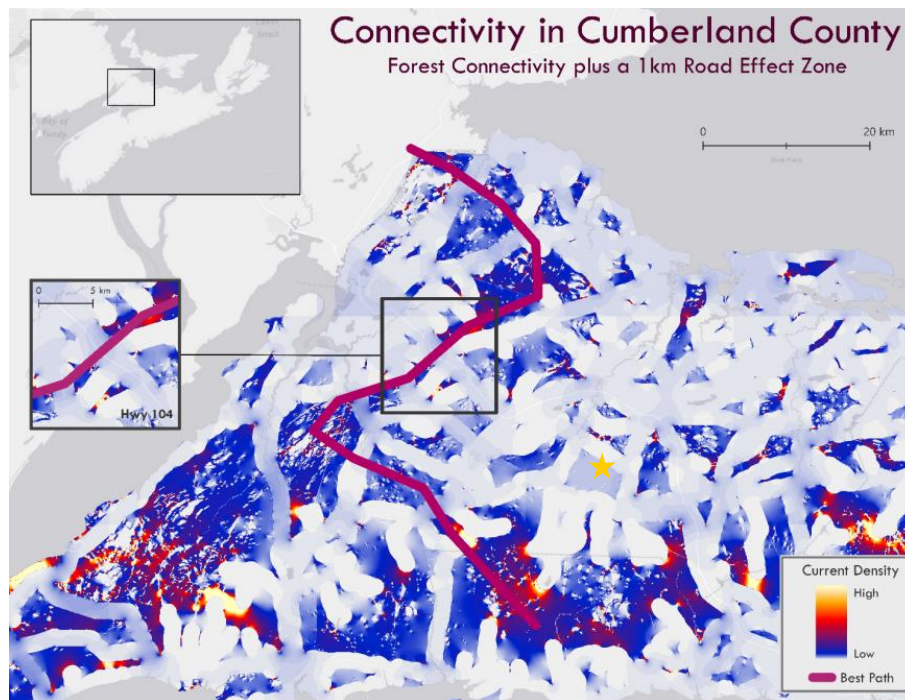


FIGURE 37: BEST PATH ACROSS CUMBERLAND COUNTY FROM THE ECONOMY RIVER WILDERNESS AREA TO NEW BRUNSWICK FOR FORESTS WITH A 1 KM ROAD EFFECT ZONE APPLIED (FROM CUNNINGHAM ET AL. 2020)



Three wilderness areas, the Kelley River Wilderness Area, Economy River Wilderness Area, and the Portapique River Wilderness Area, were identified by Nussey (2016) for having potential for corridors between them for regional movement of species. The Project is not located within these potential corridors and will not impact the ability of species to move through them. There is an existing transmission line between the Portapique Wilderness Area and the closest turbine from the Project, which could deter species in the Wilderness Area from moving further north and rather move west/east through extensive and reserved patches.

The main potential local corridor in proximity to the PDA is located between the Economy River and Portapique River Wilderness Areas. Excluding the Kelley River Wilderness Area, which is further west from the Project (42 km), there is still a number of sites west of the Project that provide suitable habitat for species and provide a smaller corridor for species coming from protected areas in the north, such as Polly Brook Wilderness Area and Old Growth Forests (15 and 21 km northwest from the Project, respectively). For species coming from the east, there are two patches of old growth forest (13.3 km east and 24 km southeast from Project). The area between the old growth forest southeast and the Portapique River Wilderness Area is mostly considered extensive management, creating a potential corridor for species coming from the east.

Species sensitivity is also a factor that should be taken into account. found that species with an interpatch dispersal distance threshold of 50 to 100 m are less likely to be affected by agricultural fragmentation in an area (Tiang et al. 2021). Scattered trees on an area classified as converted could still influence connectivity in a landscape. Scattered trees and small patches in a disturbed site can provide momentary shelter to species while searching for habitat (Conradt et al. 2001). Fine-scale features within a converted site have proven to be important elements to include when looking at ecological connectivity, as they showed several other potential paths and reflected movement patterns typically observed in field studies (Tiang et al. 2021).

5.1.10 Road Density

Existing road density and the expected increase from the Project was calculated in order to determine the potential impact on connectivity would be substantive. A road density value of 0.6 km/km² has been identified as the threshold value above where certain large species populations start to decline (Beazley et al. 2004). As many areas of the province already exceed that threshold, the Proponent aimed to site the Project in a location with higher road density so as to not add road stress to other less disturbed areas, while aiming to not substantially increase the existing road density.

A cross-province assessment area was selected for road density to explore landscape effects of the Project (**Figure 38**). Among other factors, the spatial boundaries took into consideration the large home range required by mainland moose, which is estimated to be 30-55 km² (Snaith and Beazley 2004) and that moose, depending on the season, age, and sex, travel an average of 0.5 km to 1.4 km daily (AAM 2022). As such, the assessment area for road density was determined to be a 15 km-radius buffer around the PDA.

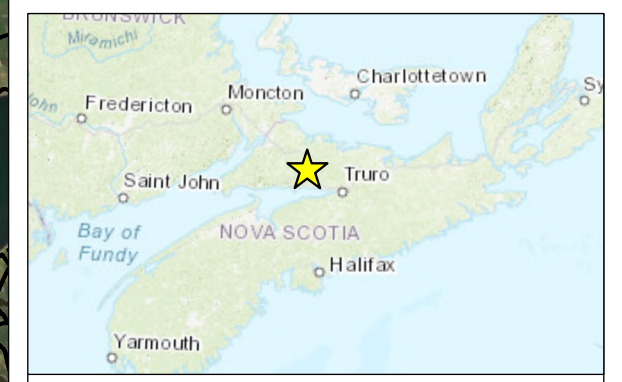
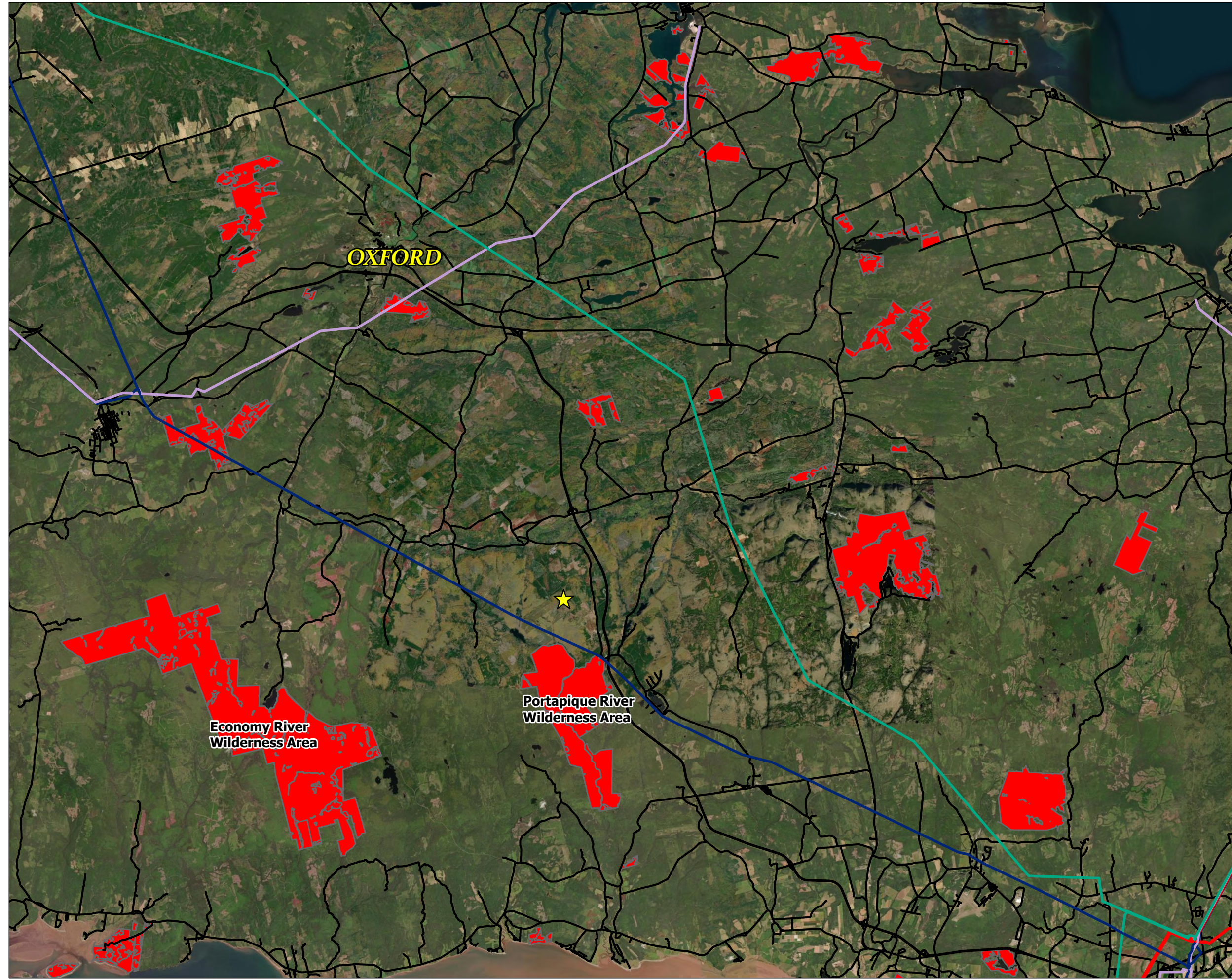
To calculate road density within the region, various sources for linear infrastructure data in the province were selected (i.e., Nova Scotia Road Network and Nova Scotia Topographic Database - Utilities). Linear infrastructure included roads and electrical gridlines. The total linear infrastructure was divided by the assessment area (a cross-province boundary; **Figure 38**) to determine the current road density (**Table 54**). The total Project infrastructure was then added to the current linear infrastructure to determine if the Project would have any substantive impacts on road density in the region. It is relevant to note that the Nova Scotia Road Network does not include all existing resource roads, particularly forestry roads. The Project has been sited on existing resource roads as much as feasible to minimize further landscape fragmentation.

TABLE 54: CURRENT AND EXPECTED ROAD DENSITY WITHIN ASSESSMENT AREA

Current road density	
Assessment area	3,628.99 km ²
Gridlines within assessment area	207.01 km
Roads within assessment area	2,207.82 km
Total linear infrastructure	2,414.83 km
Current road density	0.665 km/km²
Road density with Project infrastructure (28T)	
Collector and Interconnection	1.38 km
New roads	16.45 km
Existing roads	5.306 km
Total roads	21.756 km
Project infrastructure total	23.136 km
Estimated road density with Project	0.671 km/km²

The existing road density in the assessment area already exceeds the 0.6 km/km² threshold (0.665). Most of the infrastructure in the area is existing highways and roads, with 10% of the linear infrastructure being existing gridlines. The total Project infrastructure for 28 turbines is approximately 23 km, including collector lines, interconnection, existing roads with upgrades, and new roads. The addition of the Project represents a less than 1% increase in the linear infrastructure of the region. This is further reflected in the road density, which would only increase 0.006 km/km² with the Project (0.671). As previously mentioned, the Project will only consist of up to 12 turbines, making these calculations conservative. The final impact on road density from the Project is expected to be smaller.

Figure 32
Nova Scotia Road Network and Power Grid

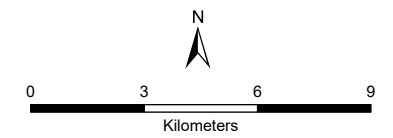


- Legend**
- ★ Project Location
 - Protected Areas and Old Forest Growth
 - Nova Scotia Road Network
- Nova Scotia Power Grid**
- 345 kV
 - 230 kV
 - 138 kV
 - 69 kV
 - Dx

Notes

Sources

- Basedata provided by the Province of Nova Scotia
- Basemap: ESRI World Topo Map



Scale: 1:200,000
Spatial Reference: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 20N
Page Size: 11" x 17"

Production Date: Dec 14, 2022 | Prepared By: Alex Torrealba



5.2 Potential Interactions and Mitigations

Approximately 57% of the PDA is located within areas that have been previously disturbed by forestry, agriculture, recreational trails, and access roads, which are not considered to be preferred moose habitat. Habitat fragmentation has been minimized during the planning phase and Project siting. To understand and mitigate the environmental effects of the Project, a variety of studies have been conducted that included two years of field work and analysis. These studies ensure a thorough understanding of the ecological conditions within the area of the Project and allow the Proponent to minimize the impact to local habitats, which influences the availability of connectivity within the landscape.

Without mitigation, the potential environmental effects of the Project to biodiversity values and ecological connectivity include the following:

- Loss and fragmentation of potential habitat during construction and decommissioning due to linear infrastructure, crane pads, and construction disturbance, deterring wildlife.
- Loss and fragmentation of potential habitat during operation due to linear infrastructure and operation disturbance, deterring wildlife.

To further reduce the likelihood of interactions between any phase of the Project and ecological connectivity, the mitigation measures, summarized below in **Table 55** will be followed.

TABLE 55: POTENTIAL INTERACTIONS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION FOR ECOLOGICAL CONNECTIVITY

Potential Interactions with Ecological Connectivity	Proposed Mitigation Measures
Short-term, reversible loss and fragmentation of potential habitat during <u>construction</u> and <u>decommissioning</u> due to linear infrastructure, crane pads and construction disturbance, deterring wildlife.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Project has been sited in an area with previous anthropogenic activities to minimize impacts to non disturbed areas. 2. The Project has been sited in an area with high road density and adjacent to existing roads to minimize fragmentation and the creation of new roads. 3. The Project footprint will be limited to that which is necessary to enable the Project to be carried out. 4. Existing roads and trails will be utilized to reduce road density, limit disturbance outside the Project footprint, and minimize the interactions with wildlife and wildlife habitat.
Long-term, reversible loss and fragmentation of potential habitat during <u>operation</u> due to linear infrastructure and operation disturbance,	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Road and access points will be laid out in a manner to minimize fragmentation of habitat and/or isolation of habitat where feasible. 6. Natural forest patches will be retained and restored

Potential Interactions with Ecological Connectivity	Proposed Mitigation Measures
detering wildlife.	<p>where possible to maintain habitat.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Control measures manage and prevent the spread of invasive plant species will be applied to each phase of the Project. 8. Erosion and sediment control measures will be installed and checked regularly during the construction phase and prior to, and after, storm events to confirm they are continuing to operate properly to minimize potential effects to adjacent habitat. 9. No fences that would impede movement of large terrestrial wildlife will be built or any of the fences that will be built will not cut off viable habitat for wildlife. 10. Participation in or funding to Mi'kmaq run mainland moose recovery programs. 11. Following the construction and decommissioning phases of the Project, natural revegetation of the site will be promoted. 12. Decommissioning/reclamation activities following the Project will be undertaken to improve interconnections between landscapes in the Project. 13. To minimize disruptions of fauna activity at night, Project construction activities will be limited to daylight hours when feasible. 14. To minimize disruptions of fauna activity at night, Project construction activities will be limited to daylight hours when feasible.

Significance of Residual Effects

In consideration of the above including proposed mitigation to avoid or minimize environmental effects, the residual environmental effects of the Project on ecological connectivity during all phases of the Project are rated not significant. The effects of the Project activities on ecological connectivity are expected to be limited to the PDA, as required to meet Project objectives during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases. The Project is to be constructed within existing anthropologically disturbed areas where possible, which reduces effects to wildlife habitat, and their ability to traverse between habitats. Disturbance of mature forest habitat as a result of this Project will be minimized through site selection and by employing the proposed mitigation measures.

Noise associated with the construction phase of the Project may deter some species, but the potential effects are considered to be short term and reversible. With the proposed mitigation, the residual interactions of the Project with habitat are not anticipated to be substantive as they are occurring already in highly fragmented habitat with ongoing forestry, agriculture, and recreation activities.

Further fragmentation of habitat, which is presently fragmented by forestry activities, agricultural operations and access roads, as well as snowmobile and all-terrain vehicles (ATV) trails, is minimized through careful site selection and the re-purposing of existing roads and trails. Following the construction and decommissioning phases of the Project, natural revegetation of the site will be promoted. Roads will be decommissioned following the life of the Project, if possible, to reconnect landscapes and improve habitat connectivity.

The broader threat of climate change will have many negative impacts overall ecological function. Although the Project may not necessarily have measurable climate effects with local impacts on an ecological level, the societal transition to renewable energy is a positive action which may support long term population growth through a reduction in climate change.

It is worth noting that a regional approach to minimizing habitat fragmentation is needed to achieve net neutral or net positive impacts. While the Proponent commits to implementing mitigation measures to minimize habitat fragmentation to the extent possible, other activities outside of the Project PDA may modify the landscape status. Other new and existing projects in the region should also implement measures to promote ecological connectivity and preserve biodiversity values in the Cobequid/Cumberland region.

6 Archaeological and Cultural Resources

The Archaeological and Cultural Resources section serves to fulfill the following Additional Information Request:

6. Provide the final Archaeological Resource Impact Assessment (ARIA), reviewed and approved by Nova Scotia Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage.

Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Group Limited was retained by Dillon during 2021 and 2022 to conduct the ARIAs whose results are included in the following section.

6.1 Archaeological Resource Impact Assessment

In May 2021, CRM undertook a program of archaeological reconnaissance within the Project. At the time of the EARD submission, the 2021 Archaeological Resource Impact Assessment (ARIA) was being reviewed by the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage (CCTH) under Permit A2021NS055. The Special Places program of CCTH issued a response to this submission on April 5th, 2022, finding the report and recommendations for the Project acceptable. Involving Mi'kmaq engagement, background research, and field reconnaissance,

the assessment was designed to identify, document, interpret, and make management recommendations for potential cultural resources within the proposed impact area.

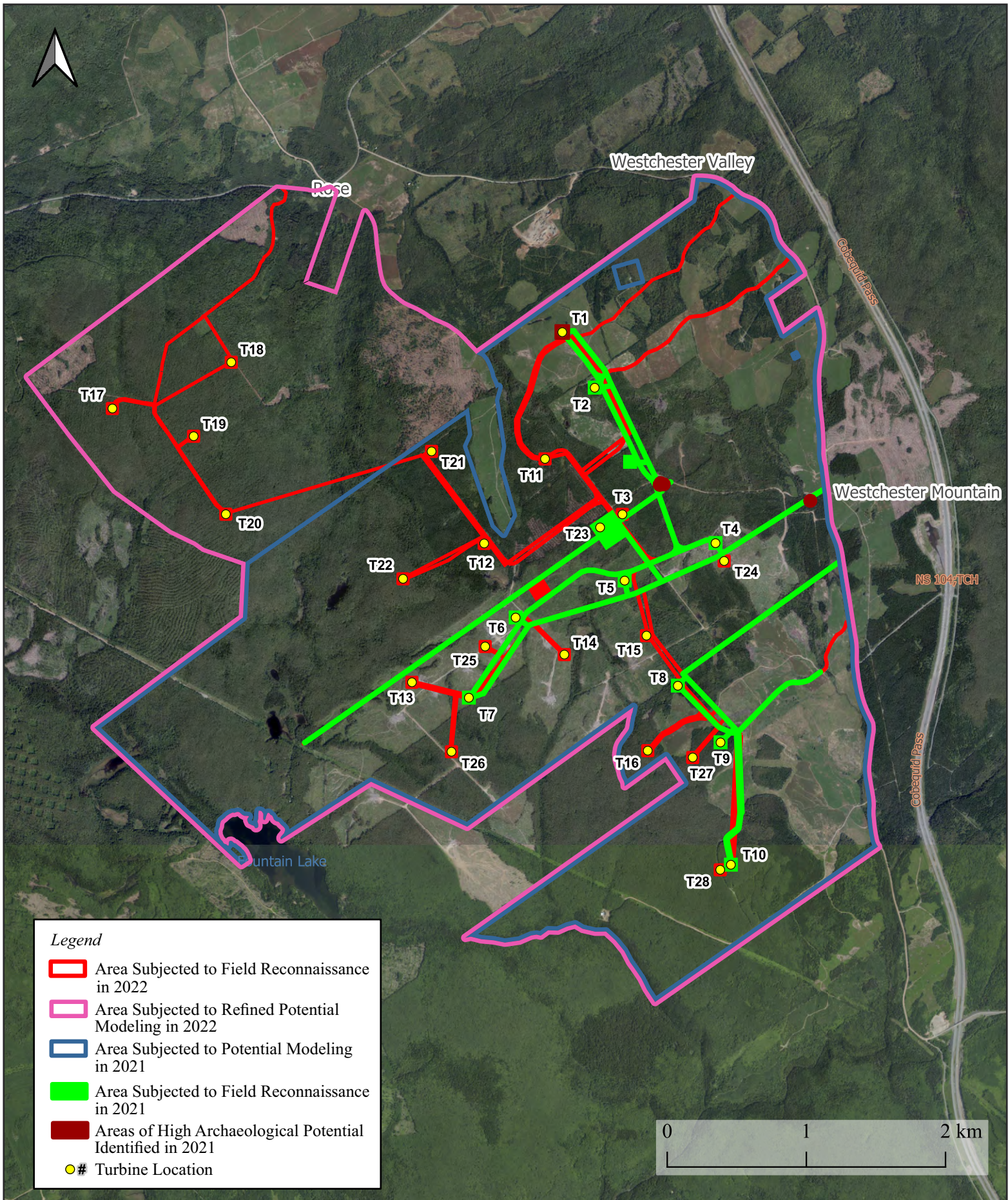
Results of the 2021 ARIA recommended a new study if any planned infrastructure should extend beyond those which had already undergone assessment. Given the updated 2022 PDA, a second ARIA was carried out in 2022. It was reviewed by CCTH under permit A2022NS125. The Special Places program of CCTH issued a response to this submission on November 24th, 2022, finding the report and recommendations for the Project acceptable. CCTH also acknowledged that although 28 turbine locations are being permitted, only up to 12 of the locations and their associated infrastructure will ultimately be constructed as part of the Project. **Appendix M** includes both the 2021 and 2022 ARIAs in full and the corresponding letters of approval.


The LAA for both 2021 and 2022 ARIAs covered an assessment area of 100 m by 100 m for each turbine, 200 m by 200 m for the substation, and 20 m on either side of linear corridors including collector lines, roadways, and transmission lines (

Figure 39).

In recognition of past, present, and future Mi'kmaw ties to lands and waters in the vicinity of the Project in the Mi'kmaw district of Sipi'kne'katik, CRM Group contacted Kwilmu'kw Mawklusuaqn's Archaeological Research Division (KMK-ARD) in May 2021 and 2022 to request any available information pertaining to traditional or historical Mi'kmaw use of the study area. The information gained from this engagement expanded upon the results of other forms of background research, providing a better understanding of the cultural and archaeological importance of the study area. It also helped enhance a relationship of information sharing.

In response to CRM Group's inquiry, KMK-ARD provided traditional Mi'kmaw land use information that was taken into consideration when preparing the archaeological assessment. Aside from information not disclosed out of respect for its sensitive or confidential nature, the contributed knowledge is presented in the ARIA and throughout this section.



	<i>Detailed Study Area</i>	<i>Figure 2</i>
	WESTCHESTER WIND ENERGY PROJECT SCREENING, RECONNAISSANCE, & SHOVEL TESTING 2022 WESTCHESTER, NOVA SCOTIA	
	November 2022 Scale: 1:35,000	

6.1.1 Background Research

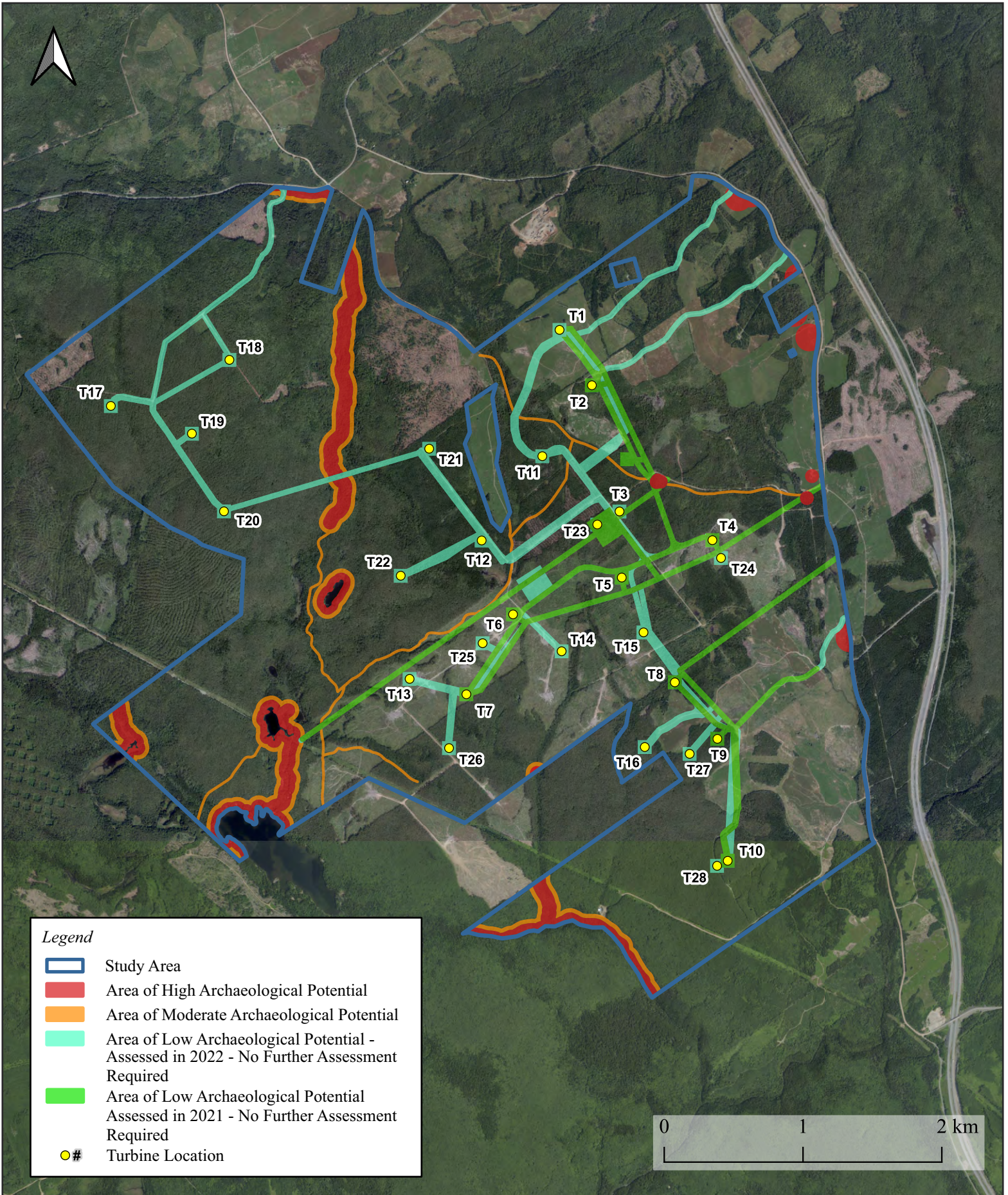
The background screening component of the ARIA, focusing on the 1,650-hectare study area which includes the 2022 PDA layout additions, was designed to further investigate the land use history of the study area and provide information necessary to evaluate the area's archaeological potential. The research included a review of relevant historic documentation incorporating the following:


- Land grant records;
- Legal survey and historic maps;
- Local and regional histories;
- Previous archaeological reports;
- Topographic maps and aerial photographs, both current and historic;
- Satellite and LiDAR DEM data were reviewed to delineate historic infrastructure and evaluate topography.

The potential modeling identified land within the LAA situated within 50 metres from the shore or bank of a body of water or watercourse as ascribed high archaeological potential. Land from 50 to 80 metres from the shore or bank of a body of water or watercourse as ascribed moderate potential. Likewise, land within 200 metres of a registered Pre-contact archaeological sites and land within 100 metres of a registered historic archaeological site as ascribed high archaeological potential. Structures identified from historic mapping and photos as situated within the study area were ascribed high archaeological potential and historic roadways and travel routes were ascribed moderate archaeological potential (

Figure 40).

As evidenced by the background study and engagement, the study area and, more broadly, Westchester Mountain, has been utilized and occupied by the Mi'kmaq from at least the *Kejikawe'k L'nuk* (the Recent People) or Late Woodland/Ceramic Period (ca. 1,000-400 BP), and by Euro-Canadian settlers from at least the late-eighteenth century. A review of the Maritime Archaeological Resource Inventory database determined that there are 18 registered archaeological sites in close proximity to the PDA, none of which impact any portions of proposed infrastructure. The nearest site, BfDb-14, is located approximately 70 m northwest of the Project. The nearest cemetery or burial plot (Westchester Mountain Pioneer Cemetery) is 30 m east from the Project. Background research of the Project area yielded no evidence of National Historic Sites, Designated Special Places, Protected Areas, National or Provincial Parks within the PDA.



 <p>CRM Group Cultural Resource Management Group Ltd.</p>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Figure 14</i>
	<p>WESTCHESTER WIND ENERGY PROJECT SCREENING, RECONNAISSANCE, & SHOVEL TESTING 2022 WESTCHESTER, NOVA SCOTIA</p>	
	<p>November 2022</p> <p>Scale: 1:35,000</p>	

6.1.2 Archeological Fieldwork

6.1.2.1 2021 Program

The 2021 archaeological reconnaissance program was carried out between May 11 and 13, 2021. A total of ten turbines were evaluated during this program, numbered T1 through T10 (

Figure 41). Weather conditions were clear with good ground visibility. Three areas of high archaeological potential were identified within portions of the LAA. The first is the high point upon which the footprint of the proposed T1 is located. Stone piles of varying sizes were located in relative proximity to the T1 study area but are attributed to agricultural field clearing activities. Due to its high elevation, providing a vantage point over the Westchester Valley to the north, Turbine 1 was deemed to exhibit elevated archaeological potential.

The second area was found northeast of the substation. It covered a cellar depression, measuring approximately 7 metres by 5 metres. The depression was approximately 1 metre in depth. No tiered stones were identified within the depression, but it is possible that the cellar was of wooden sill construction. Approximately 13 metres north of the cellar depression was a loosely tiered, dry-laid, stone pile wall. The wall was approximately 1 metre wide and 30 centimetres tall. The wall extends roughly northwest to southeast for approximately 24 metres. The wall runs parallel with a potential historic road alignment that may represent the original alignment of the Cobequid Road. This abandoned road alignment was identified adjacent the extent of the current upgraded forestry access road. The cellar and associated wall were located on a relatively high point and slopes to the west within approximately 15 metres of the cellar depression. An artificially levelled area, as compared to the relatively hummocky topography of the broader terrain, measuring approximately 40 metres by 40 metres surrounds the depression and wall. The cellar, wall, and surrounding area were ascribed high archaeological potential for encountering historic cultural resources

The third area is the proposed corridor of collector line between T4 and T8 extends northeast from T4, then follows the Westchester Road alignment south to where it travels back into the study area, southwest to T8. The proposed alignment crossed two small watercourses, both low order branches of Gleason Brook. Upslope, approximately 45 metres from Gleason Brook, an artificial depression was identified measuring approximately 7 metre east-west by 5 metres north-south. No visible sill or tiered stones were visible within or surrounding the depression. Some scrap metal was visible within the depression, under the forest ground cover. The depression is approximately 30 metres south of the original Cobequid Road alignment, as identified in Fletcher (1905), and adjacent to a secondary trail linking Westchester Road to the Cobequid Road, also identified in the field. The depression and its surrounding topography were ascribed high archaeological potential for encountering historic cultural resources.

6.1.2.2 2022 Program

The 2022 archaeological reconnaissance program was carried out on September 29, October 4, and October 5, 2022. An additional 18 turbine locations, numbered T11 through T28, and a new substation location, were evaluated during this program (

Figure 41). Through engagement with the provincial regulator, a program of limited shovel testing was recommended for the area identified in 2021 as exhibiting high archaeological potential (T1). As in 2021, the weather conditions were clear with good ground visibility during the field program.

An area of high archaeological potential intersecting the infrastructure line between T20 and T21 was identified during the background study. The elevated potential was determined based on the higher stream order and known greater potential of locating archaeological sites along significant watercourses. After transecting the area, the watercourse at this location was determined to be of low archaeological potential due to the limited waterflow witnessed and a wide and wet surrounding area likely serving as a seasonal floodplain. A large tree throw was inspected within this floodplain which showed sediment collection and moderate water retention below the surface. Evidence of a forestry road was noted on the west side of the floodplain area. Photo evidence of this area is included in **Appendix M**. As a result of the field reconnaissance, the T21 study area and associated proposed infrastructure is ascribed low archaeological potential. The remaining turbine locations, substation site and associated linear infrastructure footprint showed no areas of elevated archaeological potential.

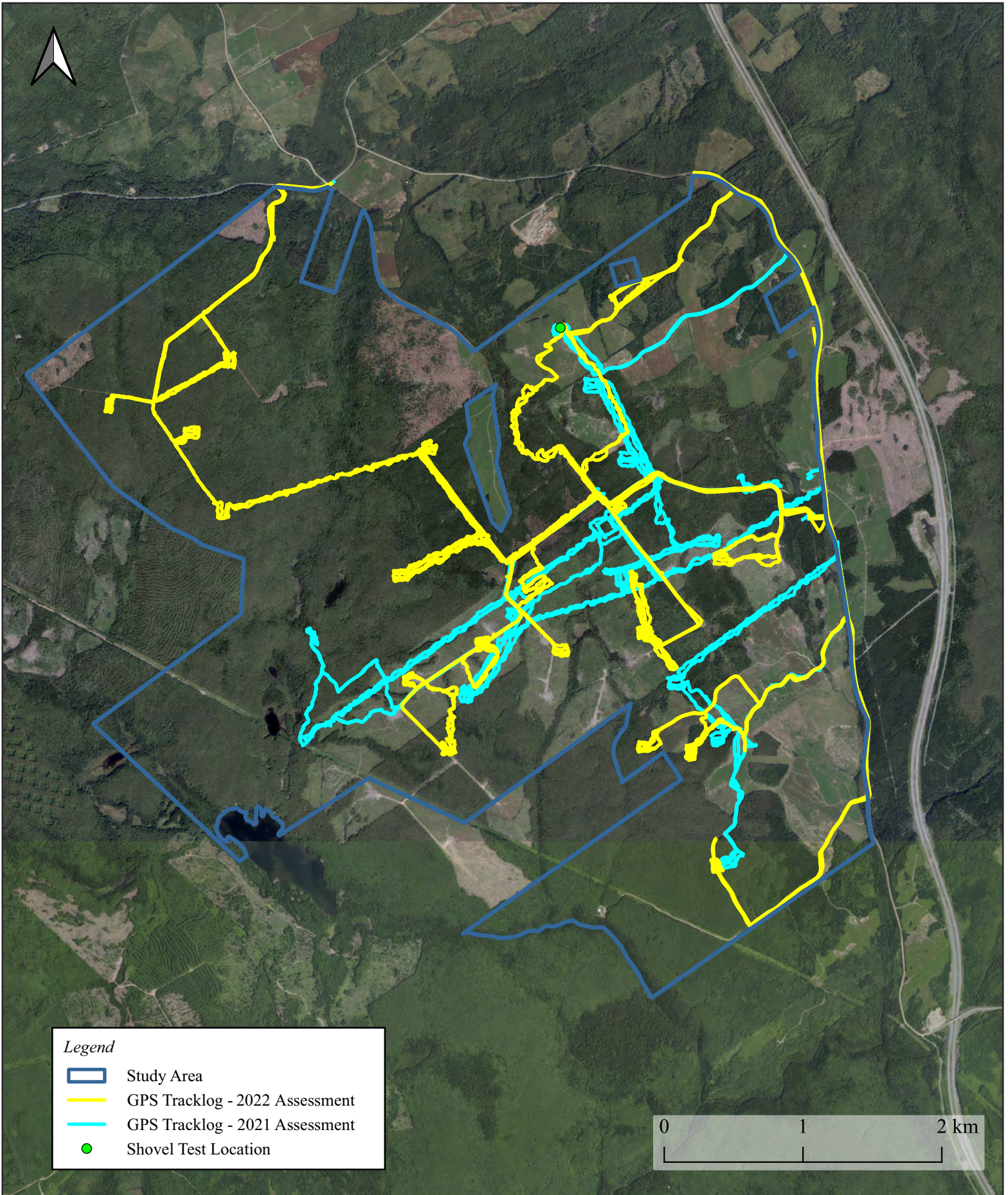
An exploratory shovel test was deemed appropriate where the new transmission and access road line intersected with T1 from Permit A2021NS055 (


Figure 41). The area is situated on a raised hilltop with a panoramic view of the surrounding area. The lone shovel test was excavated to 46 centimetres depth below surface (dbs) and its observed strata were recorded in 3 lots. The upper stratum (Lot 1), measured from the ground surface to 4 centimetres dbs, consisted of loosely compacted, medium textured, brown loamy sand, with roots and rootlets. Representing an LFH-Horizon, this layer was a combination of root mat, organic material, and topsoil. Lot 2, measured from 4 to 26 centimetres dbs, was a layer of medium-compacted, medium to coarse textured orangish brown loamy sand with roots, rootlets, and a medium percentage of pebbles. Lot 3, measured from 26 to 46 centimetres dbs was a densely compacted, medium to coarse textured brownish orange loamy sand with rootlets and a high percentage of pebbles and cobbles. No artifacts were recovered from the test unit.

As a result of reconnaissance and exploratory subsurface testing, no areas of high archaeological potential were found to be located within the proposed infrastructure. No cultural material was recovered during the field reconnaissance or exploratory subsurface testing. All areas of high and moderate archaeological that were assessed in the field were ascribed low archaeological potential. This ascription is based on the watercourses being of

low order drainage from higher elevations and the subsequent distance from navigable water sources, the sloped, rocky, and undulating nature of the topography, and the shallow soils.

FIGURE 41: 2021 AND 2022 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE TRANSECTS



 <p>CRM Group Cultural Resource Management Group Ltd.</p>	<i>Results of Reconnaissance</i>	<i>Figure 13</i>
	WESTCHESTER WIND ENERGY PROJECT SCREENING, RECONNAISSANCE, & SHOVEL TESTING 2022 WESTCHESTER, NOVA SCOTIA	
		November 2022
		Scale: 1:35,000

6.2 Potential Interactions and Mitigations

Without mitigation measures, the Project has the potential to interact with heritage resources via accidental discovery of archaeological or cultural components during excavation activities. Based on the findings from the 2021 ARIA, CRM Group provided five management recommendations for the Project. Following further studies in 2022, four recommendations were provided by CRM Group based on the 2022 ARIA results. Recommendations from the 2021 and 2022 ARIA were deemed acceptable by the Special Places program from CCTH. It was recommended for the 2022 ARIA that the remainder of the proposed wind energy infrastructure footprints, as described in the report and outside of the above noted features, be cleared from any requirement for additional archaeological assessment. Based on the 2022 exploratory subsurface test, it was recommended that the area identified as the proposed T1 location be cleared of the requirement for further archaeological assessment.

Recommendations for both years were incorporated in the mitigation measures and are included in the Environmental Management and Protection Program (**Appendix O**) for construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning phases. The potential interactions of the Project on archaeological and cultural resources and the proposed mitigation are summarized in **Table 56**.

TABLE 56 POTENTIAL INTERACTIONS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Potential Interactions with Archaeological and Cultural Resources	Proposed Mitigation Measures
Direct impact to cultural resources during <u>construction</u> .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Avoidance is the preferred method of mitigation in all instances where archaeological resources are present. 2) If the proposed infrastructure alignments should deviate from the areas assessed in this report, an ARIA should be undertaken, as the surrounding study area retains archaeological potential. 3) Ground intrusive work activities will not exceed the predefined Project areas. 4) Site workers will be informed on the high potential for archaeological resources in the area, what to look for and proper processes for anything found. 5) Construction workers working within 80 m of a watercourse will be advised of the higher potential for archaeological resources. 6) Contingency and emergency response procedures will be developed and implemented. 7) If archaeological deposits or human remains are encountered during construction activity within the study area, all work in the associated area(s) will halt and immediate contact will be made with the Special Places Program (John Cormier: 902-424-4542).

Potential Interactions with Archaeological and Cultural Resources	Proposed Mitigation Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8) Until a qualified archaeologist arrives at the scene, no one will disturb, move or re-bury any uncovered artifact. 9) Activities at the site will only resume when authorized by Archaeological Services and once mitigation measures have been completed. 10) If bones or human remains are found, work in the area will cease, and the RCMP will be immediately notified. 11) No one will disturb, move or re-bury any uncovered human remains. 12) If the discovered resources are related to Indigenous culture, the Nova Scotia Office of L'nu Affairs will be contacted to determine how best to proceed with respect to repatriation of the resources. 13) The Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History will be notified at (902) 424-7353, should fossils be encountered during the ground intrusive work.

Significance of Residual Effects

The potential to encounter previously unidentified archaeological resources will to be limited during the construction phase and none occurring during operation, maintenance and reclamation phases. After mitigation measures, potential to encounter previously unidentified heritage resources is anticipated to be low, as the PDA has been surveyed in two consecutive years without any findings. However, educating site workers on the high potential of archaeological resources in the area is crucial to ensure adequate responses if any heritage resource were to be found.

7 Closure

The Project site was selected due to the existing mixed anthropogenic land uses and impacts over these areas, in order to minimize impacts to undeveloped lands as much as feasible. In order to further mitigate risk to local and migratory wildlife during the Project phases, there will be a concerted effort to use existing corridors found on site, to limit over story removal, and vegetation management. Additionally, a comprehensive post-construction monitoring plan will be developed and will include monitoring for bird and bat mortality. The broader threat of climate change will have many negative impacts to wildlife such as Mainland Moose, including exacerbation of ticks and parasites, as well as and the potential for thermal stress (NSDNRR 2021). Overall, the societal transition to renewable energy is a positive action which may support long term population growth through a reduction in climate change impacts.

Remaining approvals required that pertain to the AIR are listed below (**Table 57**). The provide further opportunity for the Proponent to continue to work with provincial regulators on minimizing environmental impacts

TABLE 57: REMAINING APPROVALS REQUIRED PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE PROJECT

Approval/Permit	Agency	Jurisdiction	Status, applicable notes
Watercourse Alteration Approval	NSECC	Provincial	To apply following EA approval
Wetland Alteration Approval	NSECC	Provincial	To apply following EA approval
Archaeological Field Research Permit	NSDCCH	Provincial	Obtained
Crown Land Easement Application	NSDNRR	Provincial	Ongoing

The Westchester Wind Project provides an excellent opportunity to produce renewable energy on already agriculturally productive and fragmented lands, providing source diversity and helping to meet increasing energy demands in Nova Scotia. The Proponent is seeking to develop the Project with the intent of helping Nova Scotia meet its renewable electricity targets while providing local economic benefits. The Proponent is pleased to provide this addendum to the Policy, Planning & Environmental Assessment Branch of the Department of Environment and Climate Change and looks forward to working with provincial regulators to progress the Project to a construction ready stage.

Many adaptation and mitigation options can help address climate change; however, no single option is sufficient alone. As discussed at COP26, substantial emissions reductions over the next few decades are required to limit climate warming to below 2 degrees Celsius relative to pre-industrial levels. The Westchester Wind Project and other similar projects represent an integral part of the global effort to reach these reduction targets, which the Province of Nova Scotia has recognized and integrated into legislation.

The following benefits will result due to the Project and are considered as advantages of this development:

- Production of emission-free energy, which will displace energy produced from fossil fuels in Nova Scotia;
- Assist Nova Scotia in meeting the target of 80% renewable energy set in the Renewable Electricity Regulations made under Section 5 of the *Electricity Act*;
- Help decrease anthropogenic induced climate change, which is putting both human and environmental health at risk;
- Increase revenue to the Municipality of Cumberland through the payment of annual property taxes;
- Increased revenue to local businesses due to activities associated with the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the Project;

- Increased revenue to landowners participating in the Project; and
- Creation of additional employment in the region during all Project phases.

Respectfully submitted,

Natural Forces Developments Limited Partnership

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