

Oxford Natural Heritage Study (ONHS)



Update for Local Municipalities
May/June 2005

Oxford Natural Heritage Study

- Presentation Purpose
 - Update for municipal Councils and staff in advance of summer 2005 field season
- Outline
 - Partners
 - Project Purpose
 - Project Management Model
 - Technical Methodology
 - Timing
 - Questions/Discussion

ONHS Partners

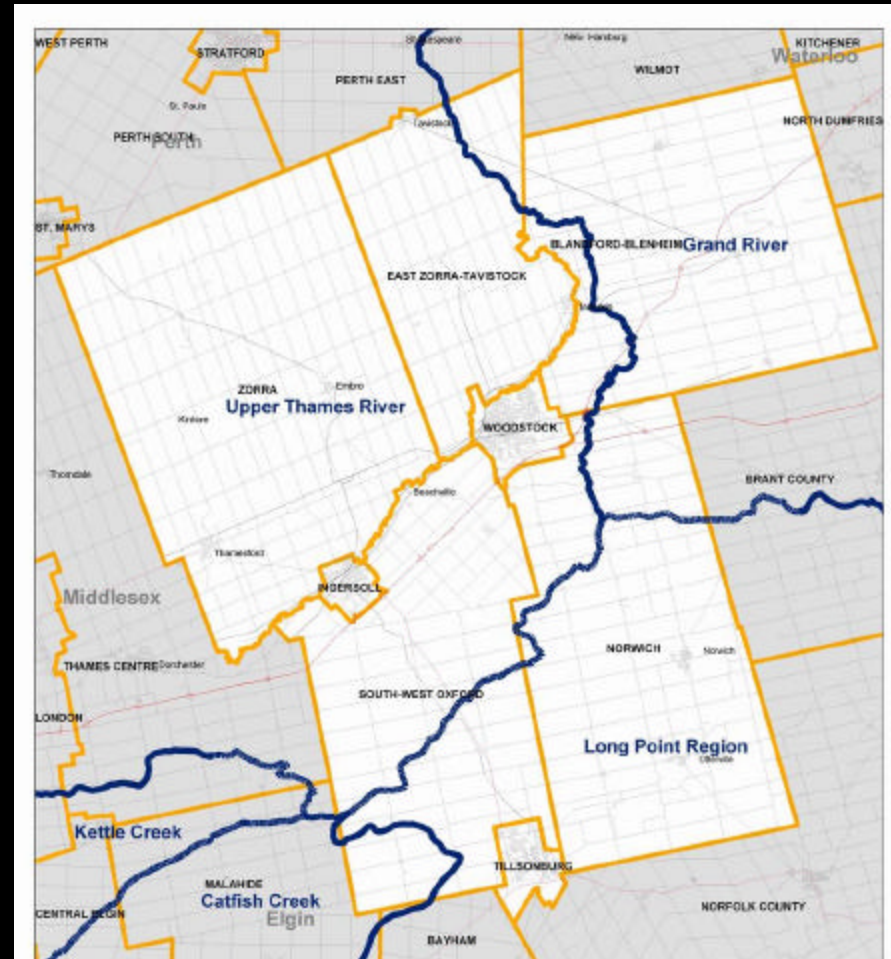
Financial Partners

- County of Oxford (\$20,000)
- Ducks Unlimited Canada (\$10,000)
- Stewardship Oxford (\$5,000)
- Ontario Trillium Foundation (\$50,000)
- Conservation Authorities (in-kind services)
- Ministry of Natural Resources (in-kind services)

ONHS Partners

County Conservation Authorities:

- Catfish Creek - 2 %
- Grand River - 21 %
- Long Point Region - 22 %
- Upper Thames River - 55 %



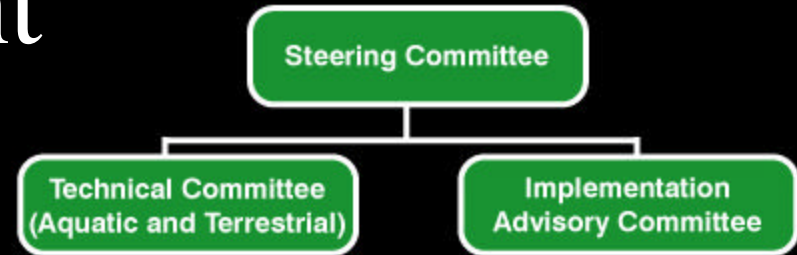
ONHS Purpose

A project to assess the natural heritage resources (aquatic and terrestrial) of Oxford County and to identify measures to protect and enhance these resources for the future

Project Management Model



Project Management Model



Steering Committee

- Receive input from the Technical Committee and the Implementation Advisory Committee
- Overall project guidance and approval
- Members:
 - Michael Harding, County of Oxford (Chair)
 - Jim Magee, Oxford County Federation of Agriculture
 - Tom Bird, Stewardship Oxford
 - Dave McLachlin, Ducks Unlimited Canada
 - Jeff Brick, Conservation Authorities

Project Management Model

Technical Committee

- Oversee the science components
- Recommendations to the Steering Committee
- Members:
 - Technical staff from the CA's
 - DU technical staff
 - MNR
 - Academic



Conducting vegetation assessments

Project Management Model

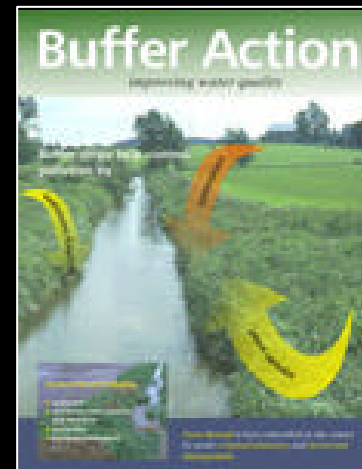
Implementation Advisory Committee

- Cross section of stakeholders
- Consider implementation options:
 - Acquisition
 - Regulation
 - Stewardship and Incentives
 - Taxation policy
 - Education
 - Other “made in Oxford” options????

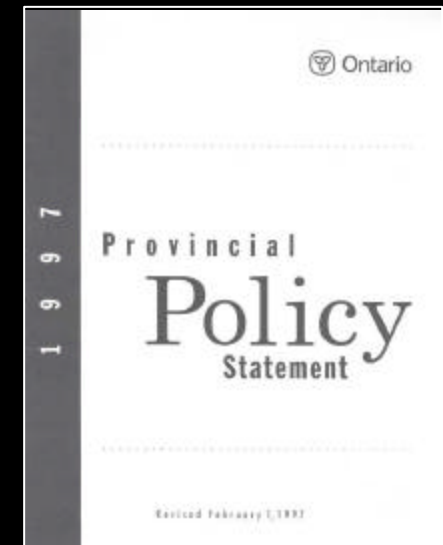
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Stewardship



Stewardship/
Education



Land Use Policies

Project Management Model

Implementation Advisory Committee

Members:

- Project partners (County, CA's, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Oxford Stewardship)
- Agricultural community
- Field Naturalists
- Anglers and Hunters
- Woodlot Association
- Carolinian Canada



Project Management Model

Project Coordination, Staffing & Communications

- Project coordination through UTRCA
- Technical work completed by UTRCA staff with involvement of other Technical Committee members
- Project promotion
- Web site for information/project updates
 - www.thamesriver.on.ca/ONHS/ONHS.htm or
 - www.county.oxford.on.ca/whatsnew/

Aquatic Methodology

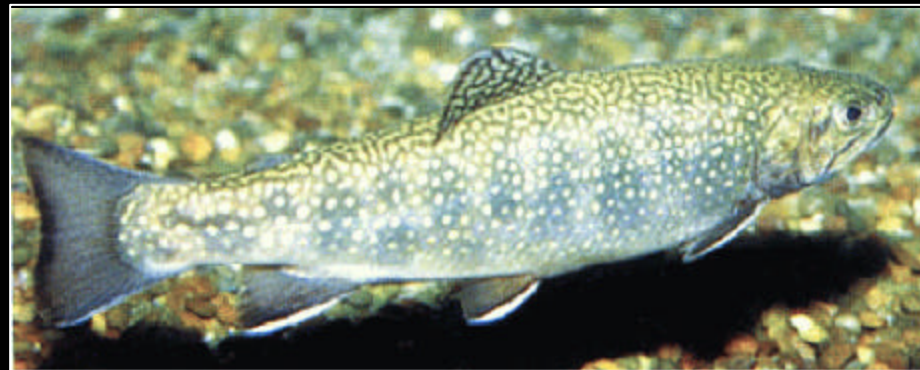
Overview

Existing data indicates some water quality problems, however, the County still has very productive and diverse aquatic communities

Presence of a few “Species at Risk” (fish and freshwater mussels)



Electrofishing



Brook Trout

Aquatic Methodology

- Focus on characterizing existing conditions
 - Formulate on a County basis
 - Serve as a baseline for future monitoring
- Main products:
 - Aquatic habitat significance and sensitivity mapping
 - Water quality / stream health monitoring network designed to cover the County

Terrestrial Methodology

Terrestrial system
includes:

- Riparian zones
- Wetlands
- Prairie habitat
- Woodlands

* Current estimate of forest
cover is 13.5 %



Riparian zones



Wooded swamp

Terrestrial Methodology

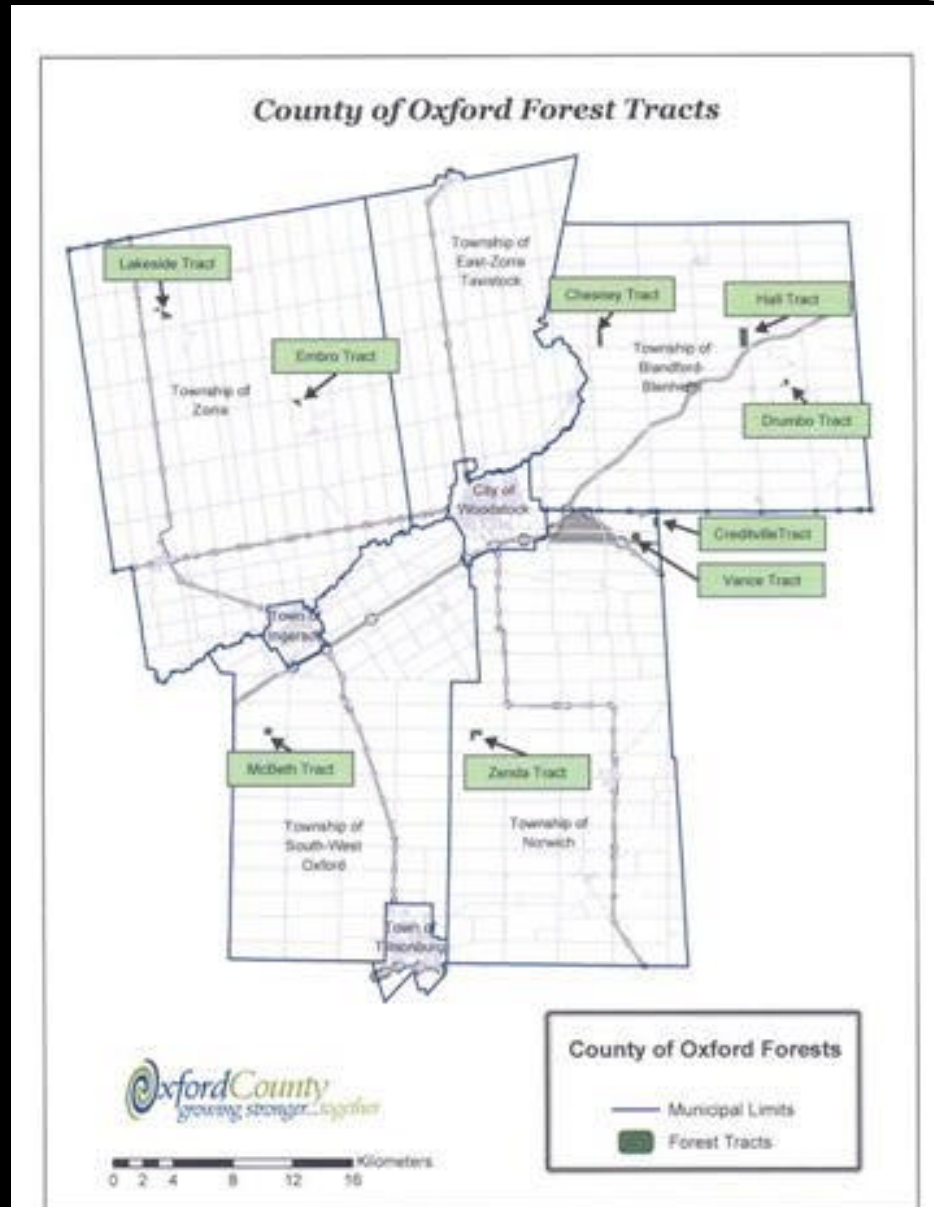
Field Work Component

- Aerial surveys to confirm patch boundaries
- Utilize data from past studies
- Targeted field surveys of lands of specific interest

Desk Top Component

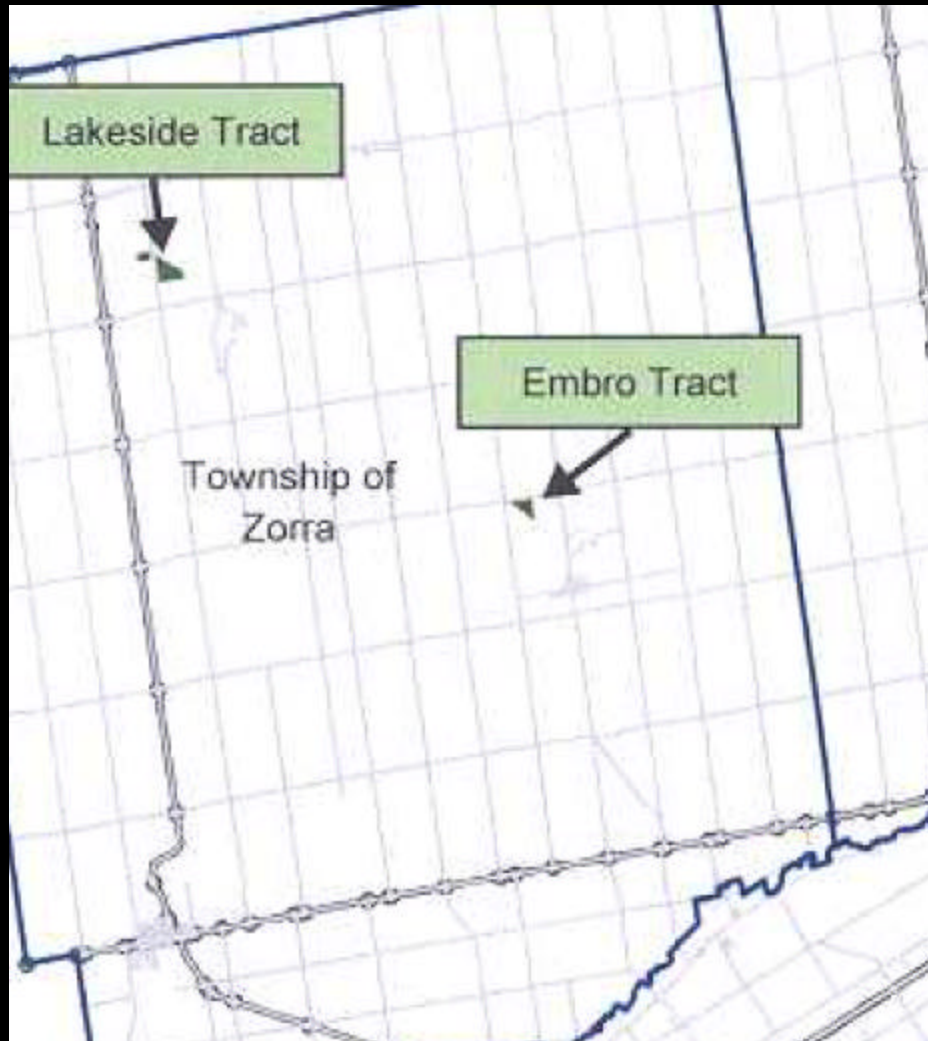
- Mapping of the terrestrial components
- Develop and model landscape criteria

Terrestrial Methodology

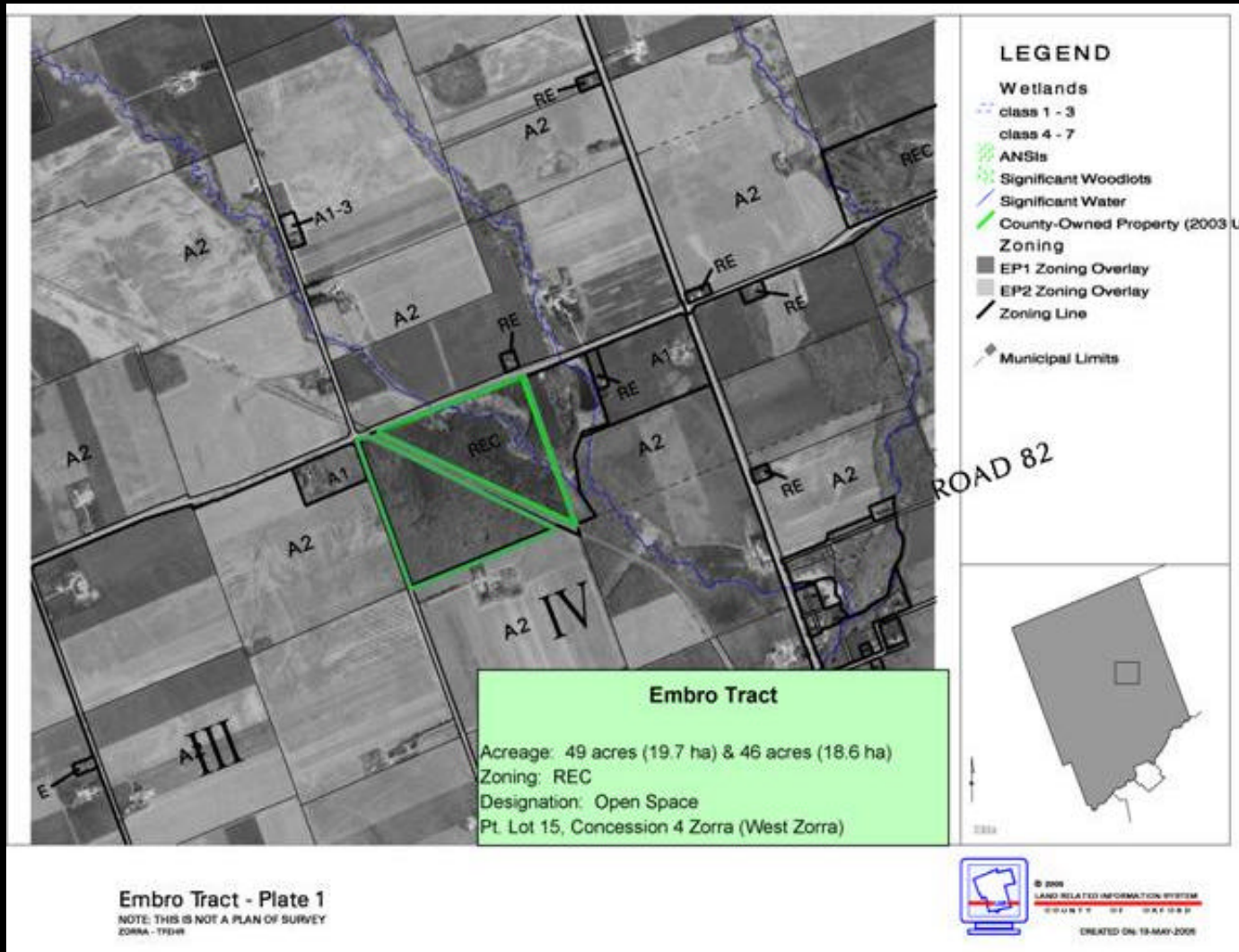


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Terrestrial Methodology



Terrestrial Methodology



Project Timing

- First Steering Committee meeting/Project Launch – March 2005
- Aquatic and Terrestrial Work – 2005
- Implementation Committee work – September 2005 to April 2006
- Final report – August 2006

Summary

- The ONHS will provide:
 - Baseline information on the state of the natural heritage resources in Oxford County
 - A natural heritage system map which can guide future restoration efforts
 - A comprehensive discussion on implementation options for protecting and enhancing natural heritage resources in Oxford County

Oxford Natural Heritage Study

Questions and Discussion

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The Oxford Landscape



Texas gates to restrict access