

A Home for Nature

Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland



WERAC
Wilderness and Ecological
Reserves Advisory Council

Acknowledgements

This **Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland** is the result of over 25 years of science advice, conservation planning, reserve site selection and assessment, resource industry assessments, discussions and negotiations. Although the process was lengthy and challenging, citizens should feel confident that the result is a well-considered and balanced contribution to sustainability of our province: for our environmental, economic and social well-being.

The Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council would like to acknowledge and thank all those who had a hand in development of the Plan: the Protected Areas Association; the Natural Areas System Plan Committee (1995-1996); the Natural Areas Plan Conflict Resolution Committee (2002-2003); the Western Newfoundland Model Forest; the Natural Areas System Plan Working Group (2006-2008); the Natural Areas System Plan Deputy Minister Steering Committee; past members of the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council; interdepartmental ad hoc committees (2000-2019) and staff from provincial government departments representing tourism, municipalities, forestry, mining, Indigenous affairs, environment and wildlife, that worked so hard over the years to bring this Plan forward. Finally, WERAC would like to thank all the people of Newfoundland and Labrador who have been involved in the establishment of our province's existing wilderness and ecological reserves.

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Available in alternate format upon request.

The maps in this document are for illustrative purposes only.

Front Cover/Back Cover
Arches Provincial Park



Message from WERAC

WERAC members: Joe Brazil, Lanna Campbell, Evan Edinger, Luise Hermanutz, Stanley Oliver, Tom Philpott, Bryn Wood and Graham Wood (chair)



Few things bind Newfoundlanders and Labradorians as strongly as our shared love of nature. Our deep connection to the land is engrained in the people who live, work and play in Newfoundland and Labrador's awe-inspiring natural environment. However, our natural landscapes are under mounting pressure from development and climate change. Now is the time to expand protection for our environment and the riches it provides. With this **Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland**, the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council (WERAC) begins a discussion with the public about protecting more of our natural places.

WERAC is a legislated, volunteer, independent advisory body appointed by the provincial government to advise on the establishment and management of our province's wilderness and ecological reserves. The Council gathers and considers public input and scientific information about proposed reserves, and provides recommendations to government on whether a reserve should be established and, if so, how it should be managed.

A Home for Nature: Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland is a proposal for developing a system of protected areas for the Island. The Plan presented here is based on over 25 years of ecosystem-based planning and consultation with scientists and government departments to find the most important areas for conservation, while at the same time minimizing potential impacts to resource industries and other land use activities.

Sites outlined in this Plan represent some of the best remaining intact examples of natural regions, significant species and habitats, and unique features on the Island of Newfoundland. The Plan makes good progress towards the conservation objectives outlined in the Newfoundland and Labrador Protected Areas Strategy. The resulting system of protected areas will help safeguard biodiversity, create opportunities for ecologically sustainable tourism, recreation and traditional use, protect cultural heritage, and provide sites for research and education about natural areas.

Provincial protected area planning for Labrador will follow and will be specific to the unique geography of Labrador. WERAC anticipates that a plan for Labrador will be developed through a collaborative process including all people of Labrador. Labrador is an important region in terms of the future implementation of a network of protected areas for the province.

The release of this document provides the first opportunity for the public to provide input on the Plan. The boundaries proposed in this plan are not final. WERAC will engage the public in two ways: firstly through general feedback on the concept of this Plan, and secondly, through the required consultation process for establishment of each individual area. For each site, there will be opportunities for the public to provide input on the boundaries and management approach. WERAC invites you to be part of the conversation as we work together to contribute to the global conservation effort and establish a system of protected areas for the Island of Newfoundland.

Executive Summary

The windswept and rugged province of Newfoundland and Labrador is a place of exceptional beauty, steeped in history and tradition. We are bound to this place by the many experiences of nature that we share - the sound of seagulls calling in the wind, waves crashing on a pebble beach, or the annual rush of flaming red and yellow fall forests. As demands on our natural resources increase, it becomes more and more important to make protection of nature a priority. Protected natural areas, and a protected area network, are about creating and maintaining that balance between development and nature - for nature but also for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Protected areas give us a place to reconnect - with nature, with each other, and across generations. Our protected areas are places where nature can continue thriving.

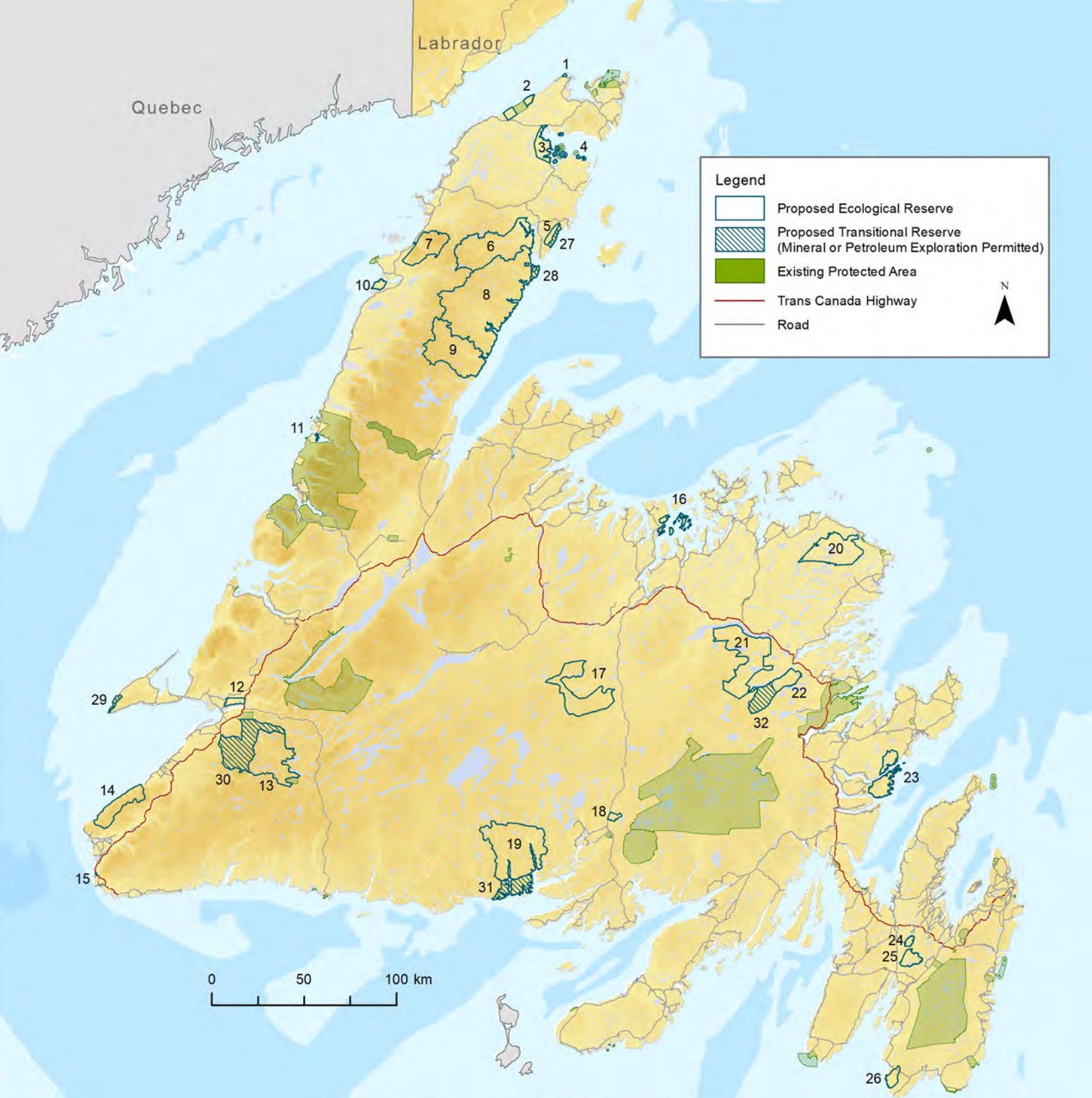
Currently, protected areas cover 6.9 per cent of the province and 6.7 per cent of the Island of Newfoundland. Newfoundland and Labrador (together with each province and territory) is working to complete a protected area network. As a nation, Canada has committed to protect 17 per cent of our country's land and inland waters by 2020. As of 2019, 12.1 per cent of Canada's land and freshwater was protected. This document outlines the plan for establishing a suite of protected areas for the Island portion of the province. Conservation planning for Labrador will follow and will be specific to the needs of the Labrador people.

Site selection for the **Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland** was based in part on protection of typical and enduring features for each natural region (including species, geography, geology and climate). Planning prioritized intact and biologically significant areas, habitats and species, unique features, minimizing resource conflicts, and consideration of climate change. The map on the

next page shows existing protected areas, proposed protected areas and proposed transitional reserves. Existing protected areas include those areas on the Island that are already part of our protected area system and count towards protected area totals. Proposed protected areas are those areas intended for protection as wilderness or ecological reserves. Transitional reserves are lands intended for future protection as wilderness or ecological reserves, where mineral or petroleum exploration will be allowed to continue for 10 years. Unless there is a significant discovery, the area will then be transitioned to protection as a wilderness or ecological reserve.

The boundaries proposed in this plan are not final. Public engagement is crucial to determining what protected areas are established, where their boundaries lie, and how the area is managed. Public consultations will be held on individual areas throughout the process to ensure that reserves are created that work for both nature and people.

Together we can take a significant step forward in protecting our province for current and future generations, and in fulfilling Canadian and global protected area targets. This plan makes great progress towards our goals for the island of Newfoundland. The proposed areas are organized by region (Western, Central and Eastern). The plan proposes 24 new protected areas, the expansion of two protected areas and the creation of six transitional reserves. Establishment of the 26 protected areas will increase the level of protection for the Island to 12.5 per cent (8.5 per cent of the province). With the addition of the transitional reserves, the total protection for the Island will increase to 13.2 per cent (8.7 per cent of the province). The plan increases levels of protection for 19 of 25 natural regions.



Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland

Proposed Ecological Reserves

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Cape Norman | 10. Spirity Cove | 19. Facheaux Bay |
| 2. Watts Point Extension | 11. St. Paul's Islets | 20. Banting Lake |
| 3. Boiling Brook | 12. Bras Mort Bog | 21. Rodney Pond |
| 4. Hare Bay Islands Extension | 13. Barachois South | 22. Gambo Pond |
| 5. Mare Cove | 14. Cape John | 23. Random Island |
| 6. Cloud River | 15. Eastern Tolt | 24. Halls Gullies |
| 7. Highlands of St. John | 16. Swan Island | 25. Ripple Pond |
| 8. Soufflets River | 17. Stony Lake | 26. St. Shotts |
| 9. Little Cat Arm | 18. Conne River North | |

Proposed Transitional Reserves

- | |
|---------------------|
| 27. Mare Cove |
| 28. Soufflets River |
| 29. Cape St. George |
| 30. Barachois South |
| 31. Facheaux Bay |
| 32. Gambo Pond |

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Introduction

Nature needs a place to call home.

Nature is amazing. It would be hard to find someone in this province who hasn't been stopped in their tracks by a beautiful sunset, the sunshine making freshly fallen snow glisten and sparkle, or the smell of spruce trees in the forest on a warm day.

Nature needs a place to call home. With climate change and increased human activity on the land, now is the time to set aside space for nature. The **Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland** is a roadmap for achieving our provincial and international goals for the conservation of nature. It takes a whole network of protected areas - from north to south and west to east- to secure our natural heritage in the face of climate change and development.

This plan marks an exciting new chapter for sustainability in Newfoundland and

Labrador. A plan for protecting the diverse natural landscapes and wild species of the Island of Newfoundland is just the beginning. Conservation planning for Labrador will follow and will be specific to the needs of the Labrador people.

A network of protected areas for the Island portion of the province needs to be built together. That means engaging people in what protected areas are established and in how they will be managed. Through this process we hope to meet our provincial, national and international goals for protection and find a balance between values regarding use of our natural resources and protection of nature on the Island. We invite you to be a part of the discussion.



What is a Protected Area?

A protected area is a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.

(IUCN Definition 2008)

Protected areas are wild spaces.

They are areas dedicated to conserving nature and wildlife for current and future generations. They are places to experience and enjoy and learn about our natural and cultural heritage.

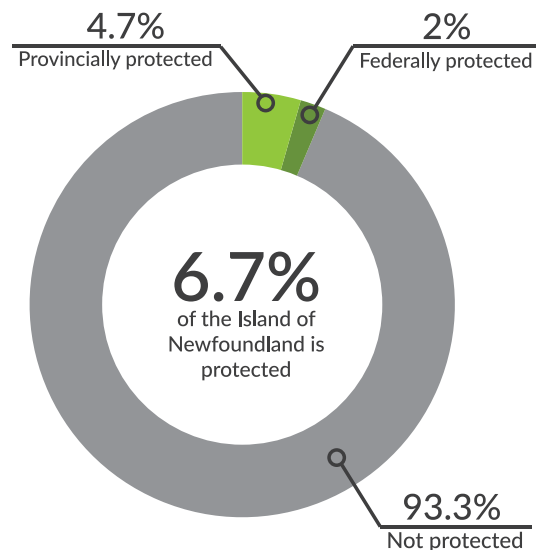
Currently, protected areas cover 6.7% of the Island of Newfoundland.

The graphic to the right illustrates how much of the Island is protected.

We have different types of protected areas in Newfoundland and Labrador. Wilderness reserves, ecological reserves and provincial parks are all protected under provincial legislation. Wilderness and ecological reserves are protected under the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act (WER Act).

Wilderness reserves are large protected areas (greater than 1000 km²) that protect significant species, natural features and landscapes, and support wilderness recreation. Ecological reserves are smaller (usually 1000 km² or less) and offer protection for representative examples of our natural ecological regions and unique or rare species or features. Provincial parks also protect natural features and provide a wide range of opportunities for outdoor activities and tourism and are protected under the Provincial Parks Act.

Federally protected national parks (such as Gros Morne National Park) also contribute to protection. Both provincial and federally protected areas are counted when we look at how much of the Island of Newfoundland is protected.







What is a Protected Areas Plan?

A protected areas network or system is more than a collection of individual protected areas. Instead, all the sites work together in order to protect natural values more effectively than individual areas could alone.

The **Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland** is a blueprint for developing a system of protected areas for the Island. In order for a protected areas system to fully capture the diversity of life on the Island, it must include examples of the wide range of species, habitats and each of the natural regions of Newfoundland. See page 65 for a map of the Island's natural regions.

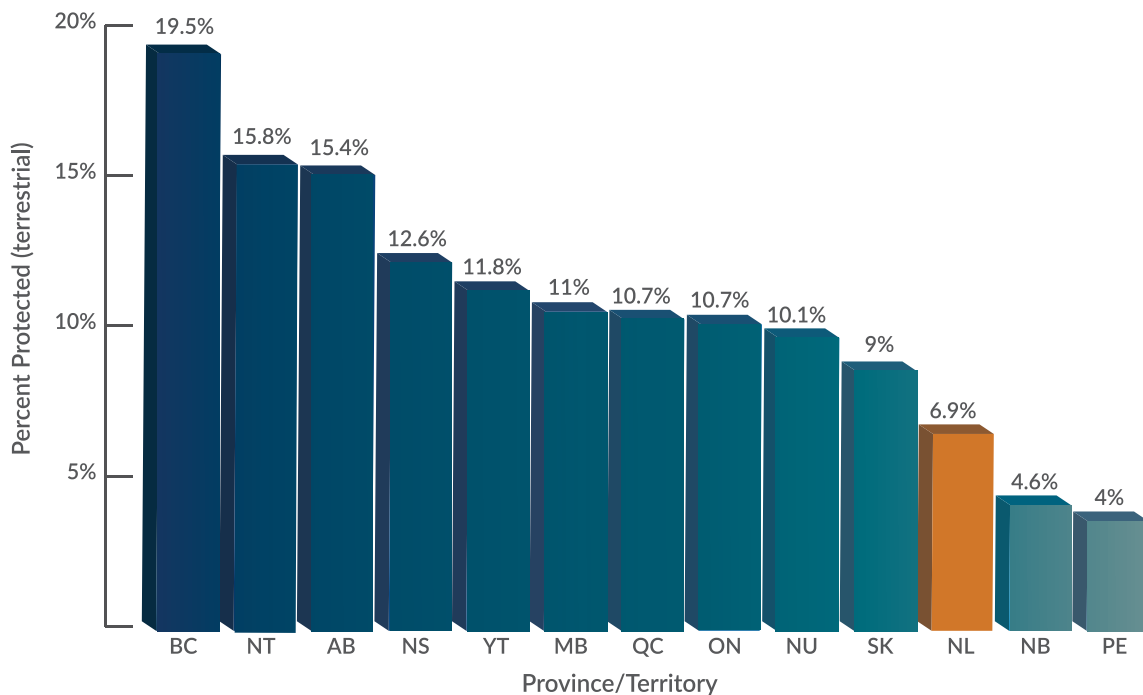
The Newfoundland and Labrador Protected Areas Strategy provides the framework for designing a system of protected areas. To ensure that important natural values are protected throughout the province, the Strategy outlines three priorities for protection:

- I. Protect large wilderness areas. These provide the best protection for wide-ranging native mammals (like caribou in the Bay du Nord Wilderness Reserve).
- II. Protect landscapes that represent each of the Island's 25 natural regions. The typical features of each natural region (such as limestone barrens on the tip of the Northern Peninsula, or Balsam Fir forests of Western Newfoundland) should be included in at least one protected area.
- III. Protect special sites with unique and rare species, fossils or areas of high biological richness (like the impressive seabird breeding colony at Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve).

Canadians support the development of a National Network of Protected Areas. A recent survey showed that the vast majority of Canadians (87 per cent) support expanding Canada's protected areas from 10 per cent to at least 17 per cent. (Earncliffe, 2017)

Each province and territory in Canada is working to complete a protected areas network. A total of 6.9 per cent of Newfoundland and Labrador is protected. As a nation, Canada has made a commitment to protect 17 per cent of our land and inland waters by the year 2020. As of 2019, 12.1 per cent of Canada's land and freshwater is protected. This contributes to international commitments to protect nature and increase the percentage of protected areas world-wide.

Canada is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, an agreement between all member nations which promotes protection of nature and human well-being. The Convention recognizes that biological diversity is about more than plants, animals and their ecosystems – it is about people and our need for food security, fresh air and water and a clean and healthy environment in which to live. The Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan (2011-2020) outlines targets (known as the Aichi Targets) for protection of land and freshwater. Target 11 aims to increase land and inland waters protection worldwide to 17 per cent by 2020. As of 2018, 15.4 per cent of the land and freshwater on Earth is protected.



Data from the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database, December 2019.

Benefits of Protected Areas

'Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul alike.'

John Muir in The Yosemite

Perhaps it is a breath of fresh air in the morning or the cool, salty wind along the coast. Nature is always present in our lives. It gives us ice cold, clean water from a spring. It gives us a retreat from the fast pace of the world, some trout from a fine day at the pond, and a campfire to warm us up after a long slog through winter snow. Nature and well-managed protected areas can provide us with many benefits.

Protected Areas Reflect our Culture(s).

These forests, rivers and mountains continue to give us joy and inspire art, song, and stories. Being in nature helps maintain our historical ties to this place and inspires new generations to build that same respect for and connection to the land. Once we step outside and spend more time in nature and in protected areas, we can teach younger generations those same skills that we learned growing up and experiencing wilderness.

Protected Areas Help Build Healthy Communities.

Our health is better when we are outside. Even 20 minutes in nature has been shown to enhance mental health and well-being. Protected areas can also help maintain access to clean water. By protecting our inland waters and watersheds, we also protect the clean water that they can supply.



Protected Areas Create Sanctuaries for Nature in our Corner of the World.

Areas set aside for protection act as benchmarks by which we can measure the effects of development or disturbance. Each protected area helps to safeguard the diversity of species and habitats of our province. The Island of Newfoundland has rare plants found nowhere else in the world. North America's largest Atlantic Puffin colony at Witless Bay Ecological Reserve is at our doorstep. Important Woodland Caribou habitat for the largest herd on the Island is protected within Bay du Nord Wilderness Reserve. It is our responsibility to act as stewards to protect our many plants, animals, landscapes, and unique and inspiring natural features.

Protected Areas Buffer the Effects of Climate Change.

We know that climate change will increase the risk of extinction for species as changes to temperature and precipitation patterns may outpace the ability of species and ecosystems to adapt. A network of protected areas can act as a stronghold against the effects of climate change, giving plants and animals a better chance to adapt to a changing climate. An intact natural landscape also improves resiliency to climate change impacts such as increases in forest pests and diseases. Protected areas help capture and store carbon, which keeps greenhouse gas emissions out of the atmosphere.



Rafting in Central Newfoundland

Protected Areas Contribute to the Economy.

Protected areas are a significant part of Newfoundland and Labrador's brand and this importance is only growing. People come to this province to experience our wild spaces. Protected areas tend to be in rural areas, so they employ people in rural areas, both directly and indirectly. They support the outdoor recreation industry and the nature tourism industry, bringing in new money to the provincial economy. Protected areas planning aids in land use planning, providing greater certainty for industries. Protected areas can also be an important part of forest certification and sustainable forest management.

Protected Areas Create Opportunities for Research and Education.

Protected areas can provide opportunities for learning about the world around us. Education delivered in an outdoor setting teaches skills and delivers experiences that cannot be learned in a classroom. Protected areas provide a place to research nature, species and environmental processes. Researchers can better understand the effects of development outside protected areas by looking at undeveloped and intact protected areas. This allows researchers to get a better sense of environmental changes and trends.



Vision and Goals

Protected areas are a crucial part of conservation and managing our province's resources for the long term. The vision below guides the development of a system of protected areas for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

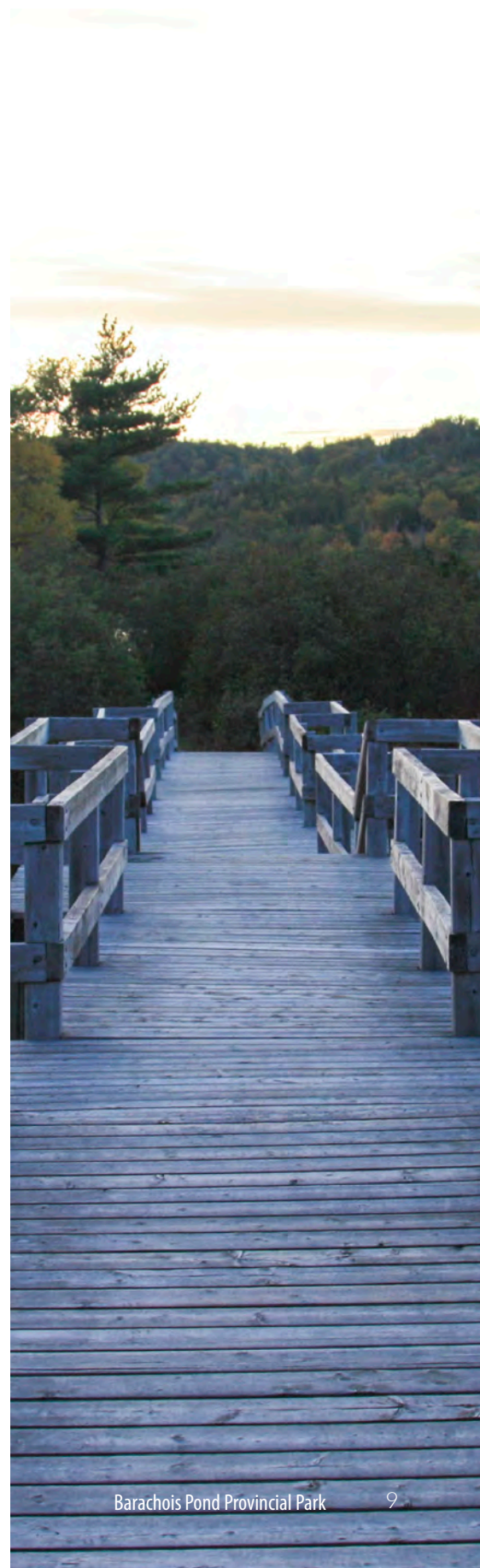
Vision

A comprehensive, resilient, well-managed network of parks and natural areas that protects our wild places, rare species and diverse landscapes for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Goals

The protected areas network for the Island of Newfoundland is designed to accomplish the following goals:

- I. To create a comprehensive, well-managed, resilient and ecologically representative system of protected areas that helps safeguard the Island of Newfoundland's biodiversity.
- II. To contribute to opportunities for ecologically sustainable tourism and recreation.
- III. To protect cultural heritage and support traditional uses that complement protection.
- IV. To create opportunities for education and research that help us increase public understanding of natural ecosystems and better manage the effects of climate change and development.



Planning Principles

'In nature nothing exists alone.'
Rachel Carson in *Silent Spring*

The **Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland** is based on many years of ecosystem-based planning and consultation with scientists, and many provincial government departments. Planning was based on sound ecological principles and a comprehensive look at the entire Island of Newfoundland. Being successful in creating a system of protected areas for the Island means balancing ecological, economic, social, cultural and spiritual values. To that end, the following principles guide the selection of sites outlined for protection in this plan.

Use the Precautionary Principle

Applying the precautionary principle means that we should protect portions of our landscapes from damage or disturbance even though science has not documented the full impact of all human activities. We take care of our protected areas by excluding those activities which are known to or assumed to have a high impact on the environment.

Prioritize Intact and Biologically Significant Areas

Conservation values and low human footprint were extremely important considerations in selecting sites as proposed protected areas. A site with good conservation values has the ability to preserve habitats and resources to maintain biodiversity long term. An area with a low human footprint has low levels of development or human disturbance. The Newfoundland and Labrador Protected Areas Strategy has also guided the development of the plan's proposed suite of protected areas. The Island of Newfoundland has 25 natural regions (see map on page 65). A natural region is a region that is distinguishable by its common natural features, like species, geography, geology and climate. Each natural region was assessed to select proposed protected areas with the lowest amount of development (i.e., areas that are mostly roadless and without hydroelectric dams, mines, communities, ATV trails, etc.). In some natural regions, suitable sites could not be found due to existing or historical development and conflicting land use. Priority was given to places with unique or rare species and habitats, areas rich in biodiversity, and areas that are representative of each natural region (see map on page 66 for more information on how much of each natural region is represented). While the priority is protecting intact areas, in some cases, areas were included that have some human disturbance but which can be rehabilitated to fill important gaps in protection.

Minimize Resource Conflicts

Proposed protected areas were selected, as much as possible, to avoid areas important for resource industries such as forestry and mining. This was done by working together with provincial government departments to come to an agreement on areas that should be protected.

Engage People in the Establishment Process

Ultimately the goal is to create reserves that work for nature and people and that foster a sense of stewardship. This means identifying, informing and involving people who have an interest in each protected area and who want to be involved in developing management options and refining on-the-ground boundaries.

Create Protected Areas that People can Enjoy

It is important to maximize the positive opportunities provided to people by protected areas. This means trying to safeguard nature as well as people's relationship to nature (whether social, cultural or spiritual).

Improve our Ability to Adapt to Climate Change

Research has shown that protected areas are helpful to climate change adaptation, as they provide ideal locations to study changes over time. Maintaining areas of low human disturbance in protected areas can increase species resiliency to climate changes by reducing non-climate stressors. Potential climate change scenarios were taken into consideration during the planning process to help inform the placement and design of new protected areas.



Proposed Protected Areas

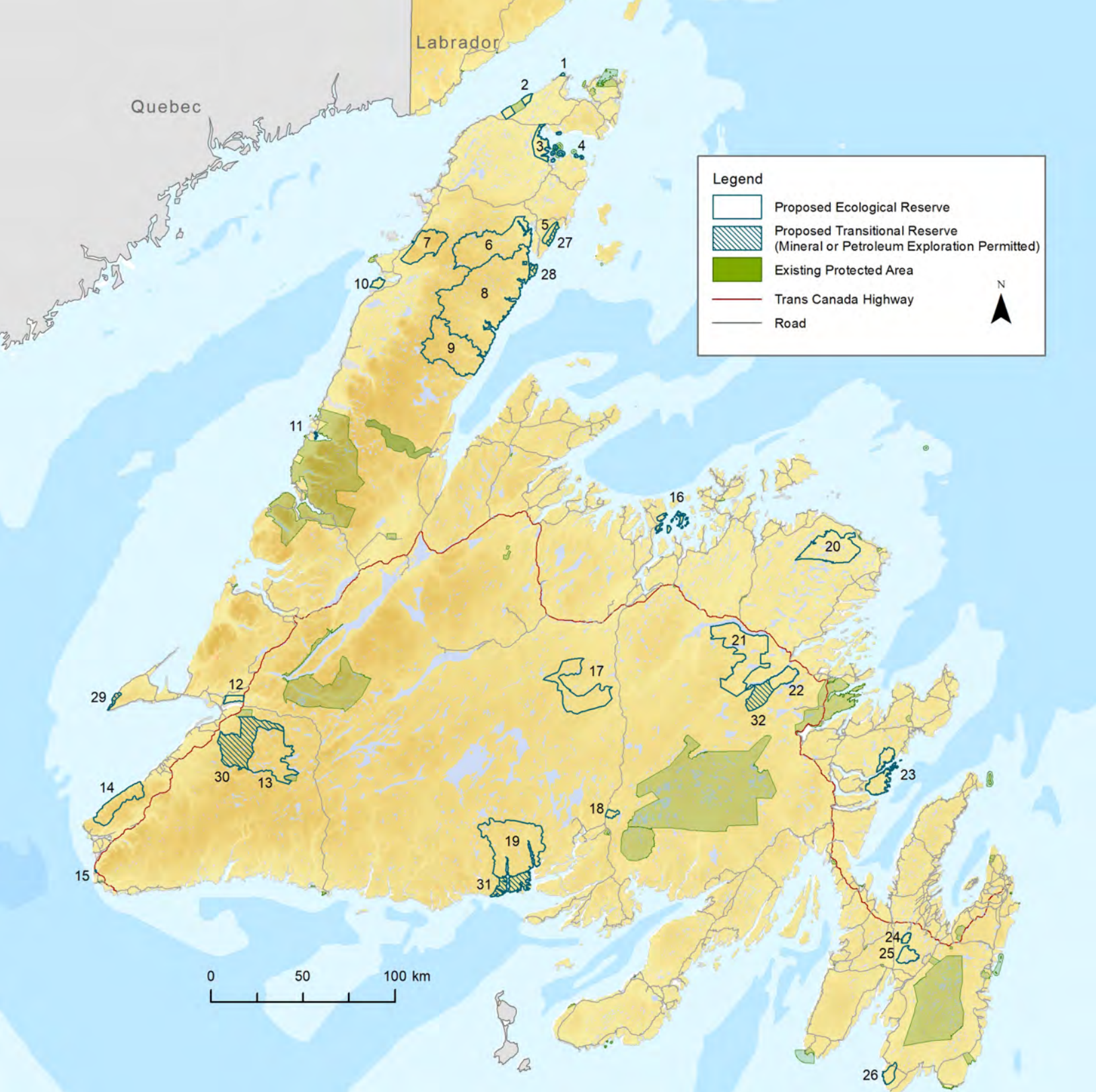
'There is a pleasure in the pathless woods.'
Lord Byron

The areas outlined on the following pages have been selected because they represent some of the best intact examples of natural regions, significant species, habitats and unique features on the Island of Newfoundland. Some areas were selected because they are the last remaining tracts of relatively intact forest that are typical of that natural region (Cloud River, Rodney Pond and Conne River North proposed protected areas). In some cases, chosen areas have good conservation value and are the sites with the least overlap with other resource interests.

Planning for the Island's Protected Areas Plan was based in part on protection of portions of each natural region's typical and enduring features (see page 65 for a map of the Island's natural regions). For the purposes of this document, the proposed areas are organized into larger planning regions – Western, Central and Eastern Newfoundland. Protected areas are also categorized by their role in supporting the Protected Areas Strategy (see page 4), as either component I, II or III.

The following maps show existing protected areas, proposed protected areas and proposed transitional reserves. Existing protected areas include those areas on the Island that already count towards protected area totals. Proposed

protected areas are those areas intended for protection as wilderness or ecological reserves. While the proposed protected areas are listed as ecological reserves, an appropriate designation - ecological or wilderness reserve - will be part of public consultations. Transitional reserves are lands intended for future protection as wilderness and ecological reserves, where staking new mineral claims or issuance of new petroleum licences will be allowed to continue for 4 years from the time of establishment. For a period of 10 years from the time of establishment, mineral and petroleum exploration or development will be permitted. After this period the sites will then be transitioned to protection as wilderness or ecological reserves unless a significant mineral or petroleum discovery has been made in that time. Appropriate regulations will be put in place to minimize ecological impacts and maintain the value of an area for protection as a reserve. Transitional reserves will not count towards protected area totals until they are established as wilderness or ecological reserves.



Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland

Proposed Ecological Reserves

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
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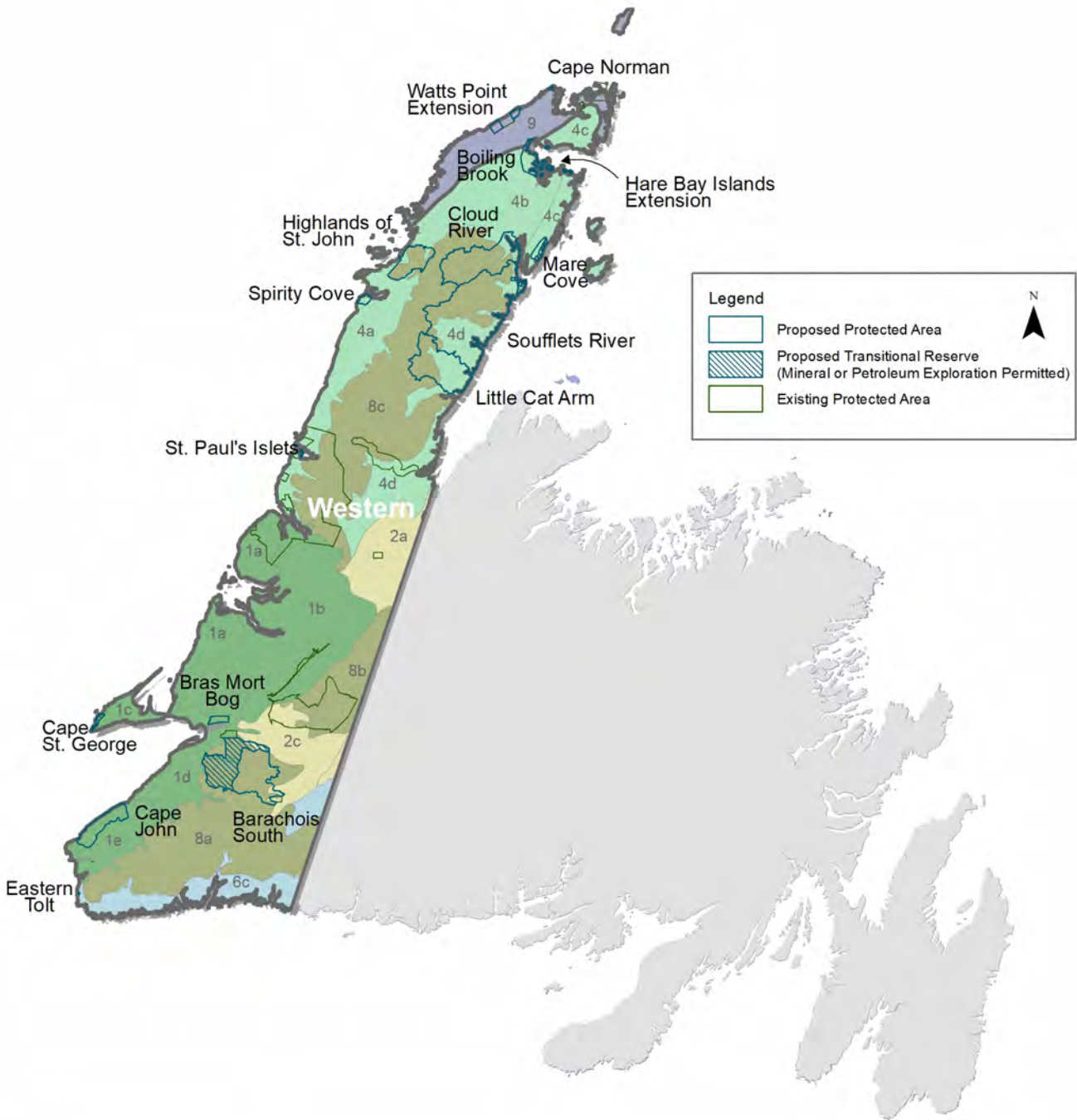
Proposed Transitional Reserves

- | |
|---------------------|
| 27. Mare Cove |
| 28. Soufflets River |
| 29. Cape St. George |
| 30. Barachois South |
| 31. Facheaux Bay |
| 32. Gambo Pond |

Western Newfoundland

The western region ranges from the impressive fjords, gorges, and limestone barrens on the Great Northern Peninsula, to the highest point of land on the Island in the Lewis Hills of the Long Range Mountains, and to the fertile farming country in the southwest. This region is home to a diverse array of habitats, landscapes and species. Sandy Cove Ecological Reserve protects the Long's Braya, a plant found nowhere else in the world except on the limestone barrens of the Northern Peninsula. Gros Morne National Park is one of the only places in the world where one can see the Earth's mantle. The region is heavily forested with large tracts of Balsam Fir and Black Spruce forests. Yellow Birch and White Pine reach their northern limit in this region. Vast areas of coastal bogs and wetlands occur here too. The west coast enjoys the Island's longest frost-free season, its warmest valleys in summer, the longest winters, and a lot of snow which remains until June in some areas and even year-round on some north-facing slopes of the Long Range Mountains. Corner Brook, the largest city in the Western Region, is found here. The region has been heavily influenced by commercial forest harvesting activities.





Natural Regions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Western Newfoundland Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. Serpentine Range Subregion 1b. Corner Brook Subregion 1c. Port au Port Subregion 1d. St. George's Bay Subregion 1e. Codroy Subregion 1f. Bay d'Espoir Subregion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Northern Peninsula Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4a. Coastal Plain Subregion 4b. Beaver Brook Limestone Subregion 4c. Northern Coastal Subregion 4d. Eastern Long Range Subregion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Eastern Hyper-Oceanic Barrens
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Central Newfoundland Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2a. Northcentral Subregion 2b. Red Indian Lake Subregion 2c. Portage Pond Subregion 2d. Twillick Steady Subregion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Avalon Forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Long Range Barrens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8a. Southern Long Range Subregion 8b. Buchans Plateau-Topsail Subregion 8c. Northern Long Range Subregion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. North Shore Forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Maritime Barrens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6a. Northeastern Barrens Subregion 6b. Southeastern Barrens Subregion 6c. South Coast Barrens Subregion 6d. Central Barrens Subregion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Strait Of Belle Isle Barrens

Cape Norman

Ecological Reserve

Size: 2 km²

Location: The northern tip of the Great Northern Peninsula, northwest of Cook's Harbour

Type: Special Feature (Component III)

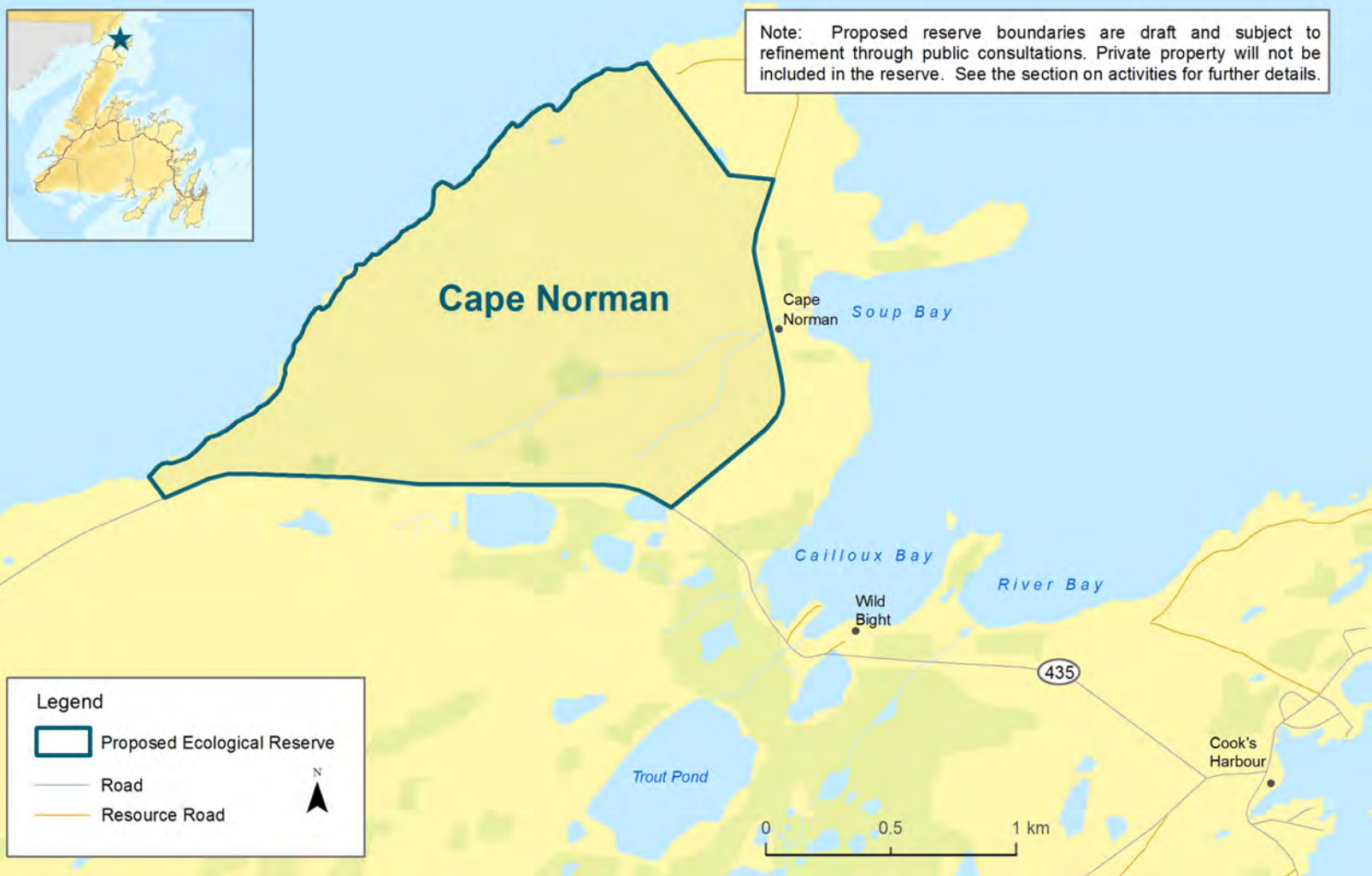
Cape Norman contains limestone barrens habitat, one of the rarest types of habitat in the province. At least 15 species of rare plants associated with limestone barrens have been recorded here. Two of those species, Fernald's Braya and Barrens Willow are found only on limestone barrens on the Island of Newfoundland. They are designated under both the provincial Endangered Species Act and the federal Species at Risk Act: Fernald's Braya and

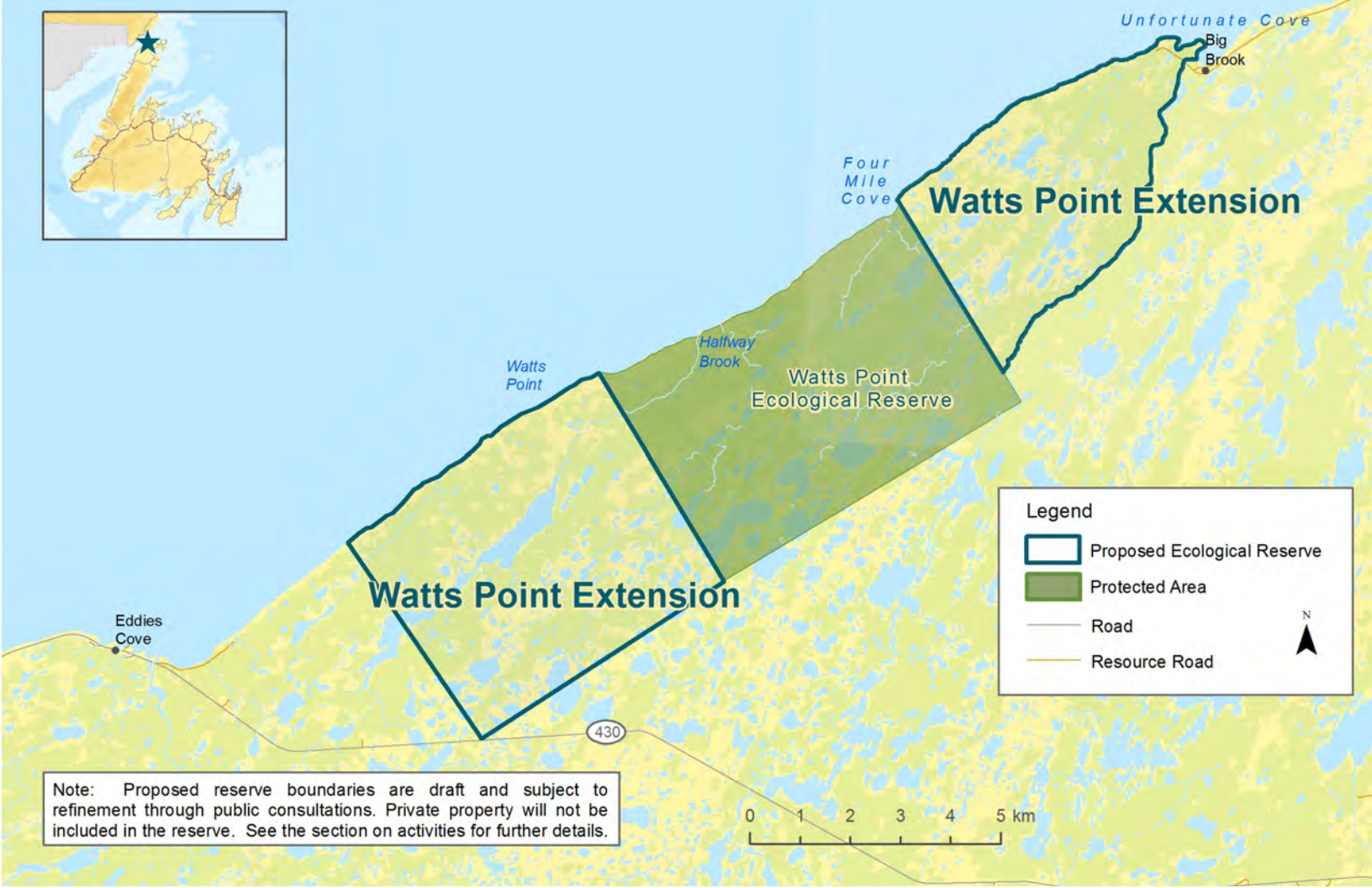
the Barrens Willow are listed as 'endangered'. This location is where Fernald's Braya and the Barrens Willow were first identified and described.

In Newfoundland, much of the limestone barrens habitat has been degraded by human use. Cape Norman is one of the few sites of limestone barrens that is relatively undisturbed by human activities such as road building or quarrying.



Note: Proposed reserve boundaries are draft and subject to refinement through public consultations. Private property will not be included in the reserve. See the section on activities for further details.





Note: Proposed reserve boundaries are draft and subject to refinement through public consultations. Private property will not be included in the reserve. See the section on activities for further details.

Watts Point

Ecological Reserve Extension

Size: 48 km²

Location: North of Eddies Cove on the Great Northern Peninsula

Type: Representative (Component II) and Special Feature (Component III)

Watts Point Ecological Reserve currently protects 31 km². The proposed extension to Watts Point Ecological Reserve extends protection of habitat for many of the province's rarest plant species. The ecologically important limestone barrens of Watts Point primarily occur in exposed, windswept areas along the Northern Peninsula coastline. These limestone barrens are

a characteristic feature of the Strait of Belle Isle Barrens natural region. Watts Point is key to protection and recovery of the endangered Fernald's Braya, one of Newfoundland and Labrador's rarest plants. The area also provides protection for the endangered Barrens Willow, and at least 24 other rare plant species.

Boiling Brook

Ecological Reserve

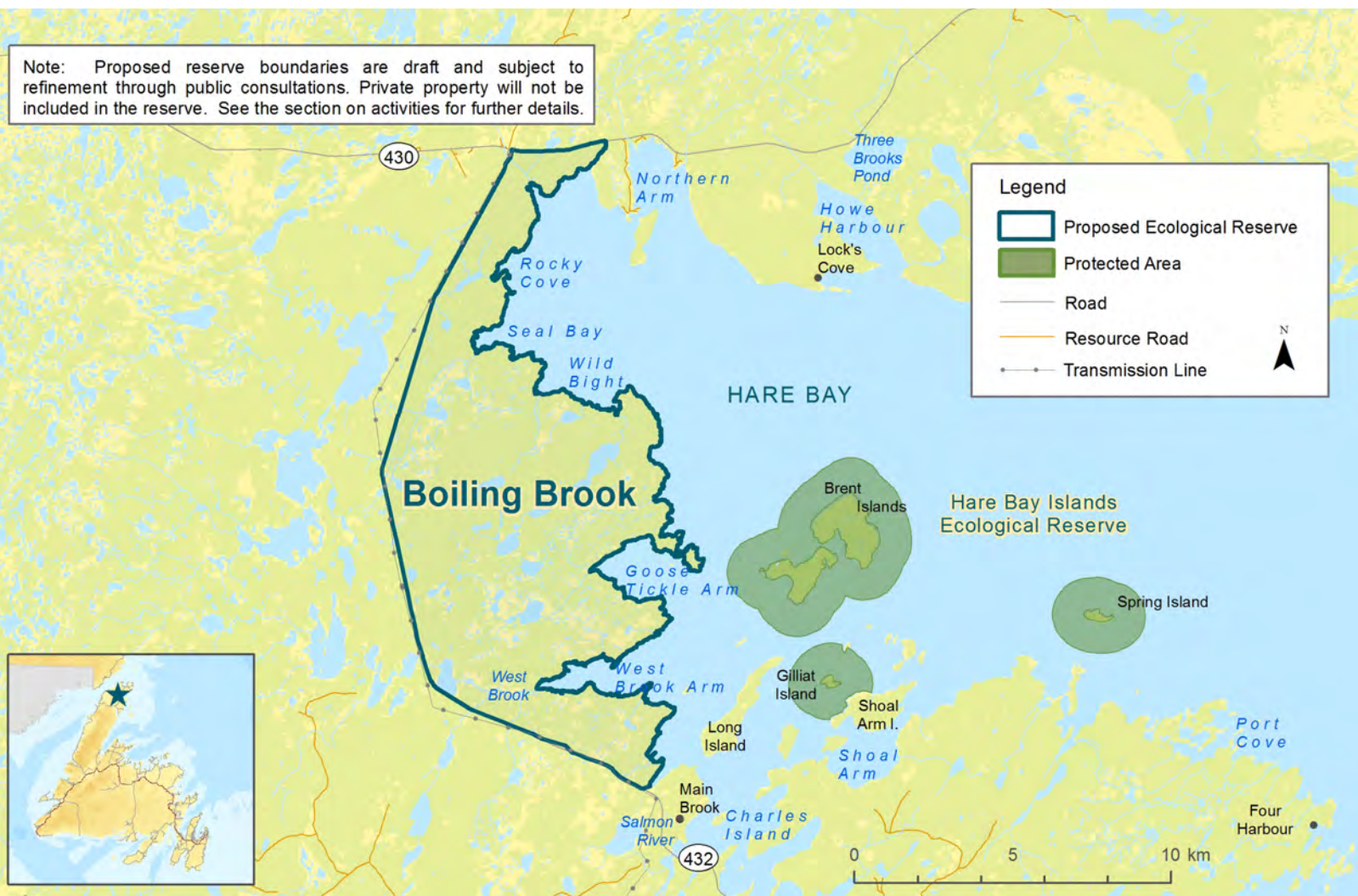
Size: 99 km²

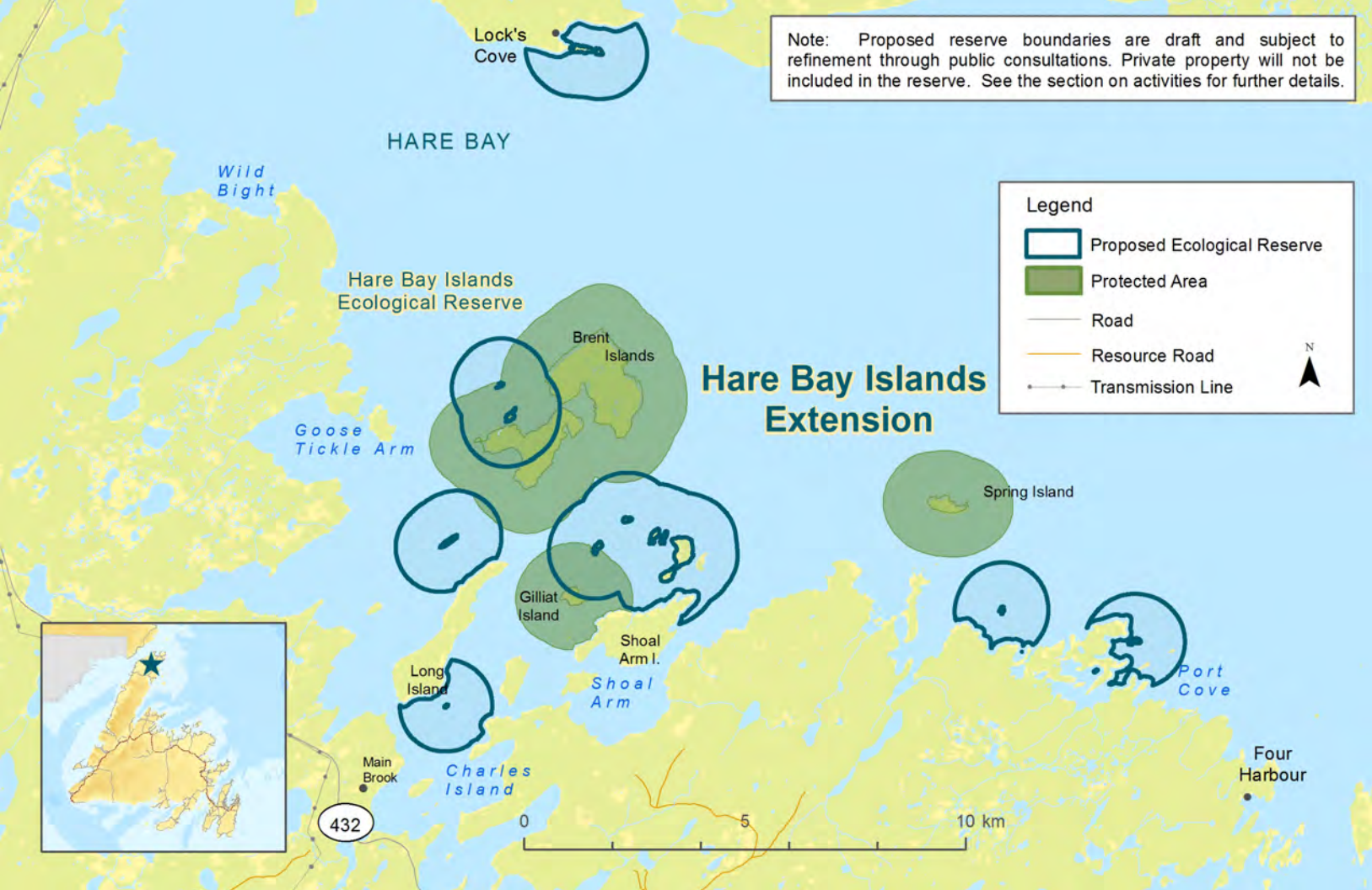
Location: Western coastline of Hare Bay, Great Northern Peninsula

Type: Representative (Component II) and Special Feature (Component III)

The Boiling Brook proposed protected area is a low-lying, coastal site that contains mostly stunted softwoods, bogs and other wetlands, and a small amount of Balsam Fir forest. The important waterfowl area along the coast includes foreshore tidal flats, and Boiling Brook. Boiling Brook is so named for the upwelling of spring water through the limestone below, giving the brook the appearance of boiling. This area remains ice-free all winter and therefore

provides an important overwintering site for waterfowl. In fact, this area is one of the most northerly overwintering sites for American Black Ducks in North America. The area is in a natural state and has not been negatively affected by development. There has been extensive natural blowdown in some of the forests of Boiling Brook. This proposed protected area provides representation of the Northern Peninsula Forest natural region (subregion 4b).





Hare Bay Islands

Ecological Reserve Extension

Size: 0.6 km² terrestrial; 30.7 km² marine component

Location: Eastern side of the Great Northern Peninsula, north of Main Brook.

Type: Special Feature (Component III)

These 12 small islands are a proposed extension to the existing Hare Bay Islands Ecological Reserve and provide important nesting habitat for breeding Common Eiders. The existing Hare Bay Islands Ecological Reserve protects a 5 km² group of islands with a 26 km² marine component and has been protected since 1964. The islands in the existing reserve and proposed extension also provide habitat for nesting Ring-billed

Gulls and Arctic and Common Terns, as well as migratory stopover sites for other waterfowl and shorebirds. While mostly treeless with heathlands and plants adapted to coastal conditions, some of the larger islands contain tracts of Balsam Fir forests. Small grassy ponds are also present on some of the islands. Fossils known as Maclurites can be found throughout the Hare Bay Islands Extension.



Mare Cove

Ecological Reserve and Transitional Reserve

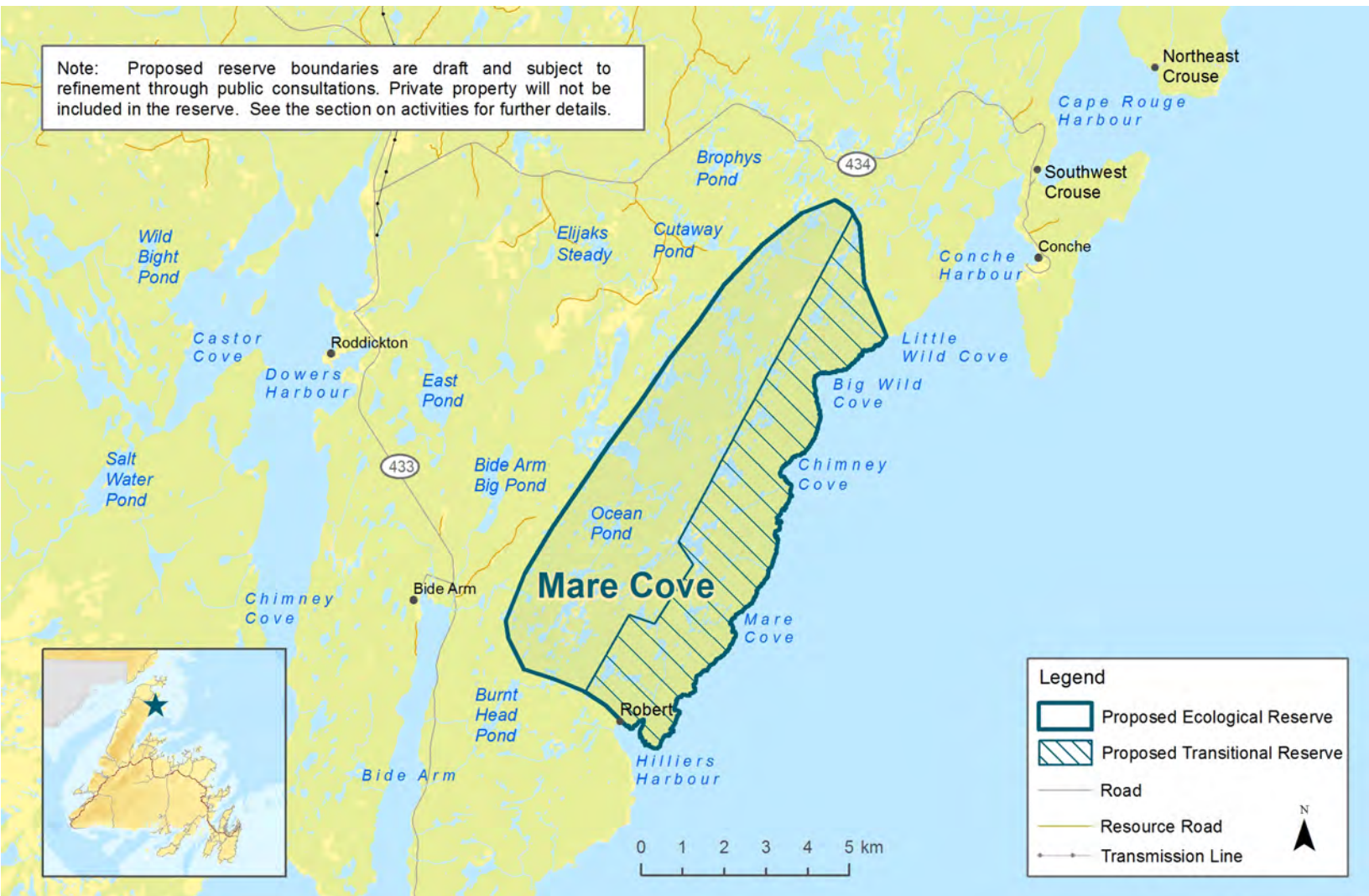
Size: 53 km² (30 km² Ecological Reserve; 23 km² Transitional Reserve)

Location: Eastern side of the Great Northern Peninsula, south of Conche

Type: Representative (Component II)

Mare Cove is an excellent example of the coastal forests along the northeastern side of the Great Northern Peninsula. The forests, dominated by Black Spruce, are shaped by the region's harsh climate and low-productivity soils. Exposed rocky headlands support dwarf shrub barrens that are typical of this part of the natural region. Mare Cove provides representation of

the Northern Peninsula Forest natural region (subregion 4c). The coastal portion of Mare Cove is contained in the proposed transitional reserve. This designation allows petroleum exploration to continue for a period of 10 years, after which the intention is that the area will be protected as an ecological reserve.



Cloud River

Ecological Reserve

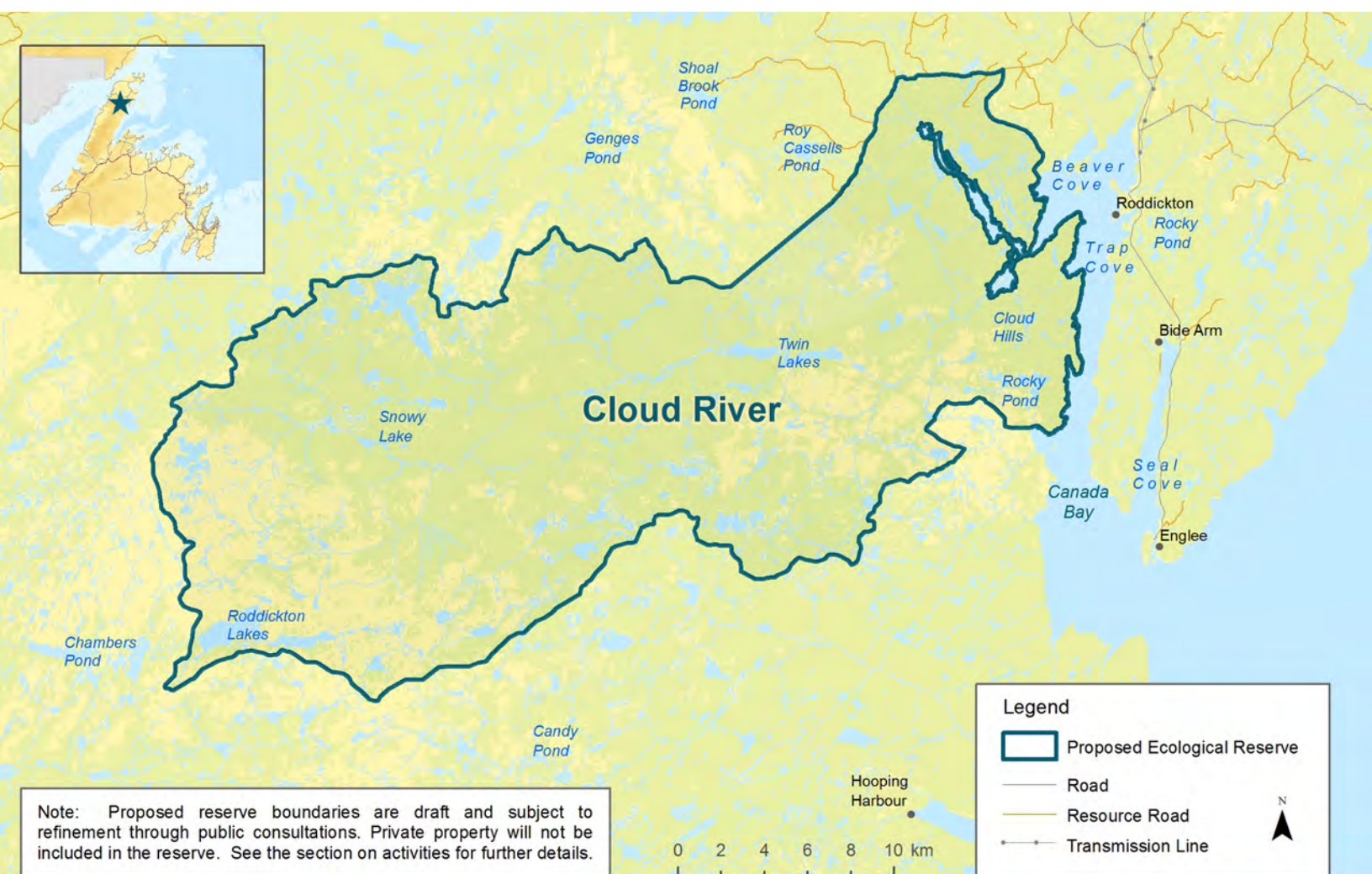
Size: 637 km²

Location: Canada Bay, Great Northern Peninsula

Type: Representative (Component II)

This proposed protected area contains the complete watershed of the Cloud River. The watershed is one of the few pristine, partially-forested watersheds remaining on the Island. From its source in the Long Range Mountains, the Cloud River descends to a large estuary at its mouth. An estuary of this size is relatively rare in the province and is not otherwise represented in our protected areas network. The area around the lower reaches of the Cloud River and 'The Tickers' estuary contain some of the only intact, unroaded forests on this part of the

Great Northern Peninsula. The forests are mixed Balsam Fir and Black Spruce; these are typical of pre-harvest forests in the region as opposed to post-harvest forests which tend to regenerate primarily to Balsam Fir. This proposed protected area provides representation of the Northern Peninsula Forest and Long Range Barrens natural regions (subregions 4b and 8c). The coastline and estuary are extremely scenic and offer plentiful wildlife viewing and outdoor recreational opportunities.





Note: Proposed reserve boundaries are draft and subject to refinement through public consultations. Private property will not be included in the reserve. See the section on activities for further details.



Highlands of St. John

Ecological Reserve

Size: 244 km²

Location: Western side of the Great Northern Peninsula, north of Hawke's Bay

Type: Representative (Component II) and Special Feature (Component III)

The Highlands of St. John (known locally as Doctor's Hills) consists of two spectacular high plateaus, the highest of which reaches in excess of 625 metres (2050 feet). The Highlands contain diverse ecosystems, including higher elevation barren plateaus, sheer cliffs, forested lower slopes and valleys, and wetlands. Exceptionally rich communities of rare plants can be found primarily on the barren summits, cliffs and steep upper slopes. Rare plants also occur in the forested Doctor's Brook valley

on the western side of the plateaus. The rich mature forests in this valley and in the lower slopes are predominantly Balsam Fir, Black Spruce and White Birch. The summit plateaus and upper slopes are not forested, but are covered by boulder fields, heath barrens with low, arctic-alpine vegetation, and tuckamore. This proposed protected area provides representation of the Long Range Barrens and Northern Peninsula Forest natural regions (subregions 4a and 8c).







Note: Proposed reserve boundaries are draft and subject to refinement through public consultations. Private property will not be included in the reserve. See the section on activities for further details.




Soufflet's River

Little Cat Arm

Legend

-  Proposed Ecological Reserve
-  Proposed Transitional Reserve
-  Road
-  Resource Road

N




Little Cat Arm and Soufflet's River

Ecological Reserves and Transitional Reserve

Size: Little Cat Arm (574 km² Ecological Reserve)

Soufflet's River (1527 km² Ecological Reserve; 25 km² Transitional Reserve)

Location: Eastern side of the Great Northern Peninsula, east of Port Saunders

Type: Representative (Component II)





The Little Cat Arm and Soufflet's River proposed protected areas contain the entire Little Cat Arm River watershed, the Soufflet's River watershed and some of the last remaining true wilderness on the Island. The forests are dominated by Balsam Fir, and tend to replace themselves one tree at a time in a process called small-scale gap replacement. This small-scale gap replacement pattern is found only on the eastern side of the Northern Peninsula and differs from the large-scale disturbances such as forest fire and insect outbreaks which occur elsewhere in the province as a means of forest renewal. Globally, boreal forest replacement

through wildfire or insect infestations is much more common, making the forest in Little Cat Arm and Soufflet's rather unique. There are few trails and most human activity is limited to the coastline, with the exception of snowmobiling during winter. These proposed protected areas provide representation of the Northern Peninsula Forest and Long Range Barrens natural regions (subregions 4d and 8c). In the proposed transitional reserve, mineral exploration is permitted to continue for a period of 10 years, after which the intention is that the area will be protected as an ecological reserve.





Legend

-  Proposed Ecological Reserve
-  Road
-  Resource Road
-  Transmission Line

N

Note: Proposed reserve boundaries are draft and subject to refinement through public consultations. Private property will not be included in the reserve. See the section on activities for further details.



Spirity Cove

Ecological Reserve

Size: 27 km²

Location: Great Northern Peninsula, south of Hawke's Bay

Type: Special Feature (Component III)

Spirity Cove, like Eastern Tolt, is an example of globally-rare wave forests (alternating bands of dead and living Balsam Fir trees created in part by wind action). The forest at Spirity Cove is one of the only wave forests occurring on a low-lying coastal plain (most others occur on hillsides),

and is part of one of the most extensive wave forests on Earth. Spirity Cove also contains ombrotrophic (rain-fed) bogs and small ponds, which are characteristic of the west coast of the Northern Peninsula.

St. Paul's Islets

Ecological Reserve

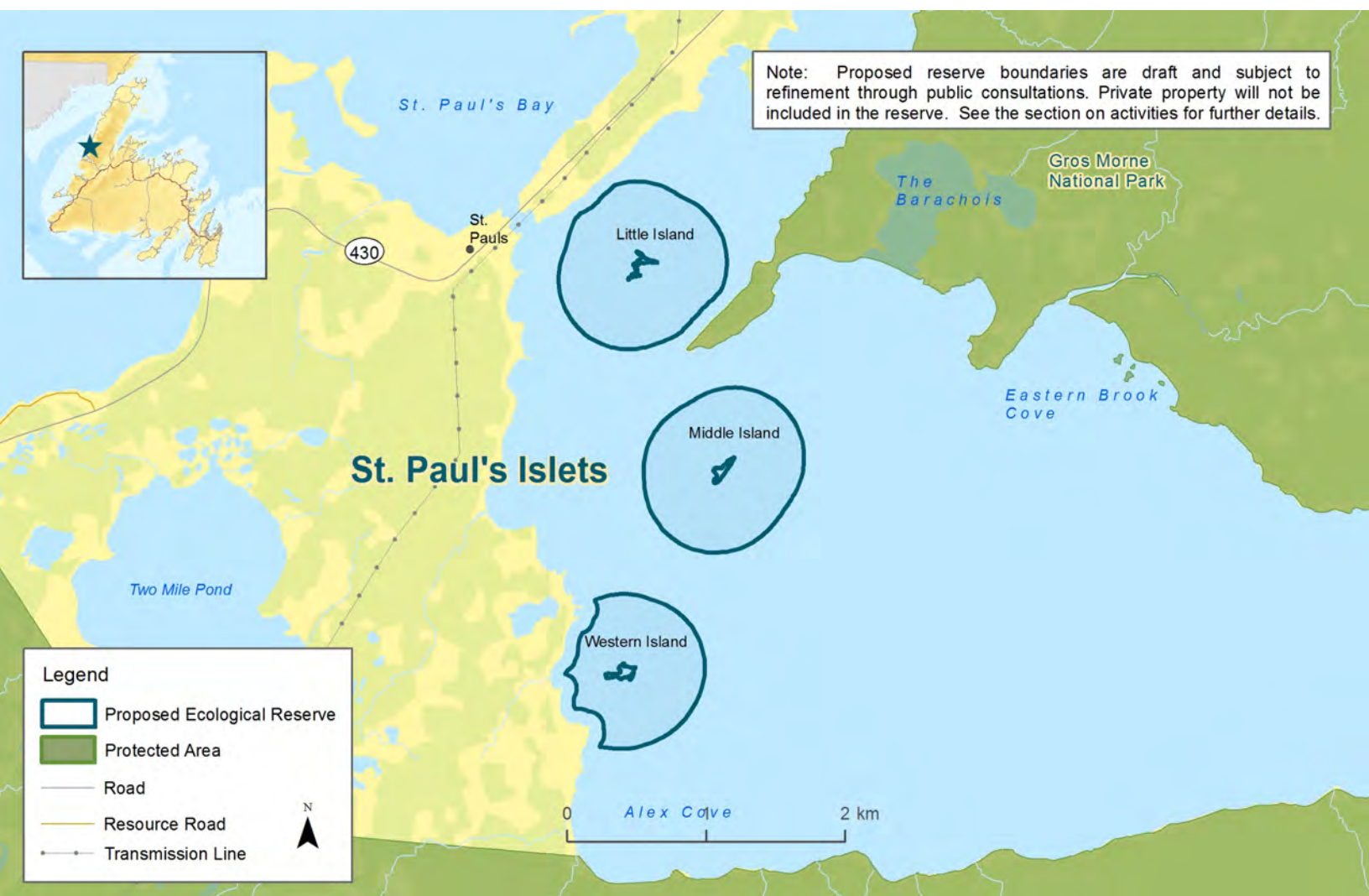
Size: 0.03 km² terrestrial; 0.3 km² marine component

Location: St Paul's Inlet on the Great Northern Peninsula

Type: Special Feature (Component III)

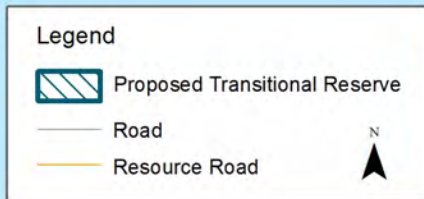
The three small islets in this proposed protected area provide breeding habitat for the largest tern colony on the west coast of Newfoundland; they are significant nesting areas for both Common Tern and Arctic Tern. St. Paul's Islets also support one of the most significant concentrations of breeding Caspian Terns in Newfoundland. St. Paul's Inlet is a large fjord with a deep narrow channel and shallow entrance extending out to St. Paul's Bay. When

the tidal range is particularly high, salt water flows into the inlet from the Gulf of St. Lawrence. A large portion of the surrounding area, including the inner portion of St. Paul's Inlet, is protected within Gros Morne National Park. The St. Paul's Islets proposed protected area provides additional protection for this significant breeding site and will include a marine component.





Note: Proposed reserve boundaries are draft and subject to refinement through public consultations. Private property will not be included in the reserve. See the section on activities for further details.



Cape St. George

Transitional Reserve

Size: 18 km²

Location: Southwestern tip of the Port au Port Peninsula

Type: Special Feature (Component III)

This small proposed transitional reserve is an extremely important limestone barrens site and the only proposed protected area for the Port au Port subregion. Cape St. George is the most southerly location in the province where this rare habitat is located. Three plant species on the provincial Endangered Species list (Mackenzie's Sweetvetch, Rock-dwelling Sedge, and Woolly Arnica) are found in this proposed transitional reserve. Three other species not currently listed as endangered but considered to be very rare, and 20 other species considered

rare but not critically so, also occur here. The southern part of Cape St. George contains mostly stunted softwoods, with a few small patches of taller Balsam Fir forest. This part of the transitional reserve is also home to three known colonies of Black-legged Kittiwakes, which nest along cliff ledges. Cape St. George is proposed as a transitional reserve. This designation allows petroleum exploration to continue for a period of 10 years, after which the intention is that the area will be protected as an ecological reserve.

Bras Mort Bog

Ecological Reserve

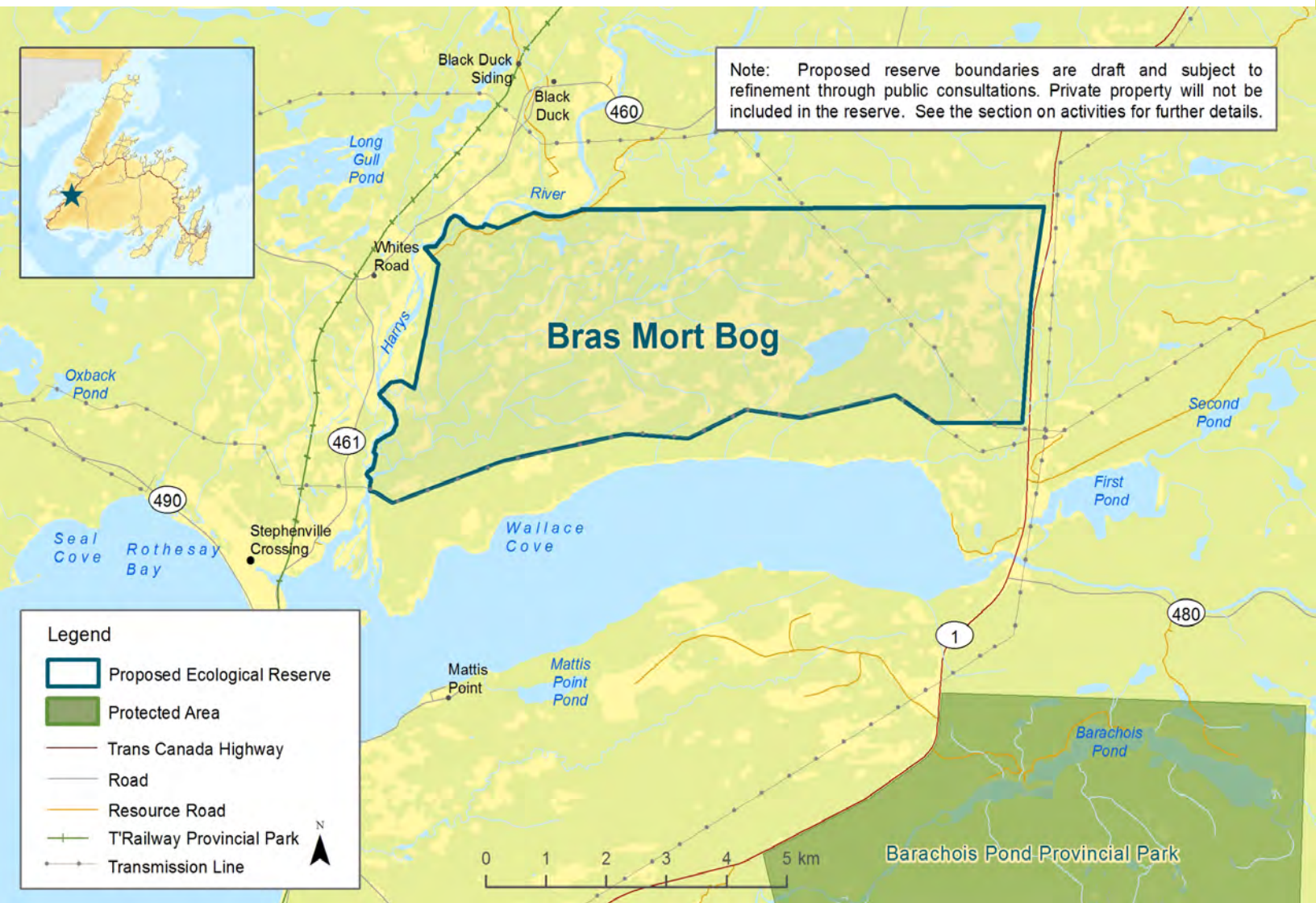
Size: 36 km²

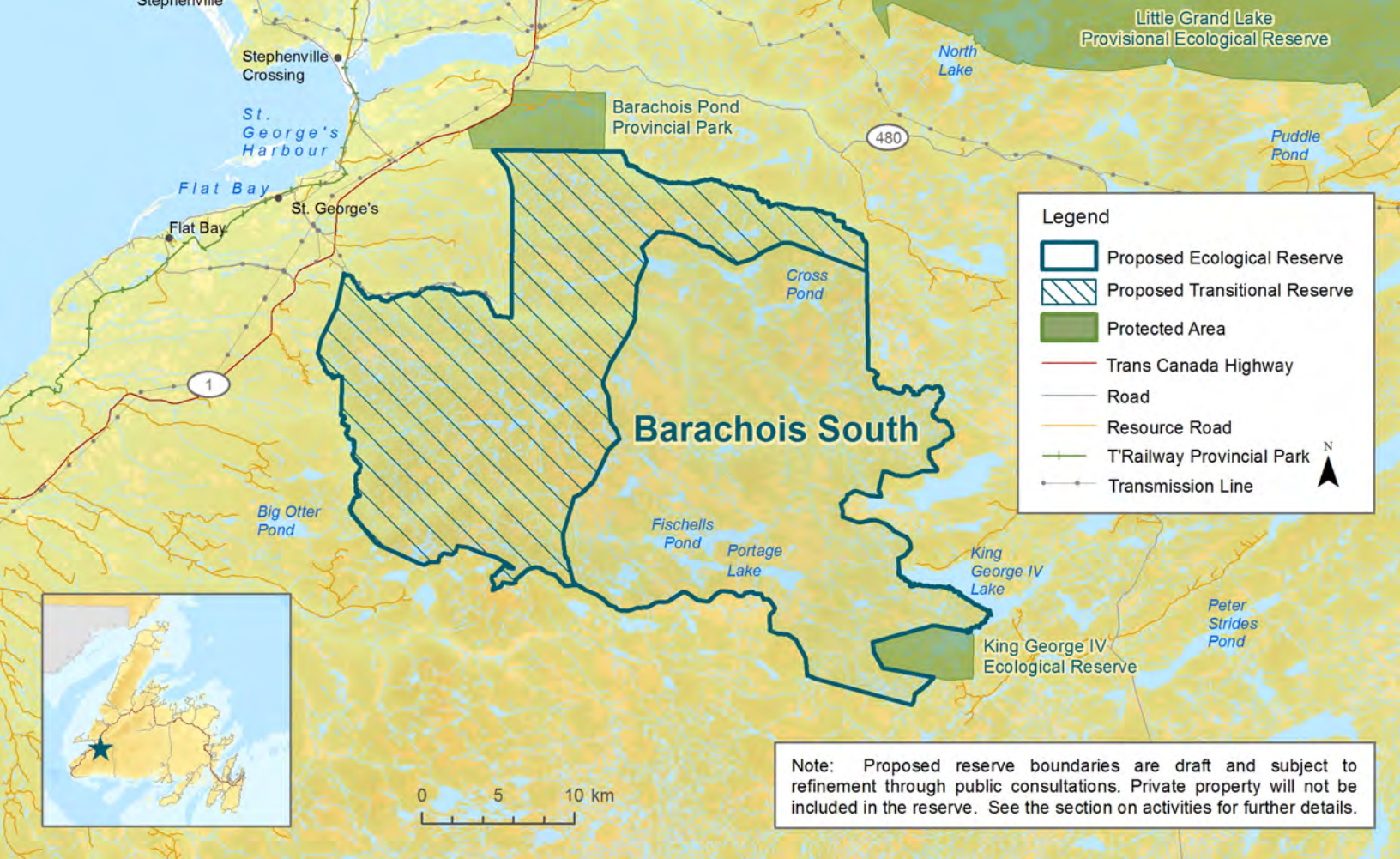
Location: West coast, east of Stephenville Crossing

Type: Representative (Component II)

The Bras Mort Bog proposed protected area is one of the largest, relatively undisturbed plateau bogs in Newfoundland. The bog has gently rolling terrain and gradually slopes from east to west. It has deep, rich soils and is characterized mainly by vast carpets of mosses and

stunted Black Spruce, with a small amount of Black Spruce forest. Bras Mort Bog provides important core habitat during fall and winter for Woodland Caribou. This proposed protected area provides representation of the Western Newfoundland Forest natural region (subregion 1d).





Barchois South

Ecological Reserve and Transitional Reserve

Size: 910 km² (487 km² Ecological Reserve; 423 km² Transitional Reserve)

Location: Southern portion of the Long Range Mountains, near St. George's Bay

Type: Representative (Component II)

Barchois South contains the ecologically important transition zone between two different natural regions: the Western Newfoundland Forest and the Long Range Barrens (subregions 1d and 8a), and provides representation of both. The sites provide habitat for Woodland Caribou, and Arctic Hare, an uncommon species. Most of the proposed protected area is typical of the many barrens and wetlands found throughout the southern portion of the Long Range Mountains. Within this largely treeless landscape, patches of tuckamore (stunted Black Spruce with some Balsam Fir) can be found. Small ponds

and wetlands are scattered throughout. The northern section of the proposed transitional reserve contains a forested valley that has not been impacted by modern commercial forestry activities. This area is intact and representative of the original forests of the west coast, with White Pine, Yellow Birch, Balsam Fir and White and Black Spruce blanketing the valley. In the proposed transitional reserve, mineral exploration is permitted to continue for a period of 10 years, after which the intention is that the area will be protected as an ecological reserve.

Cape John

Ecological Reserve

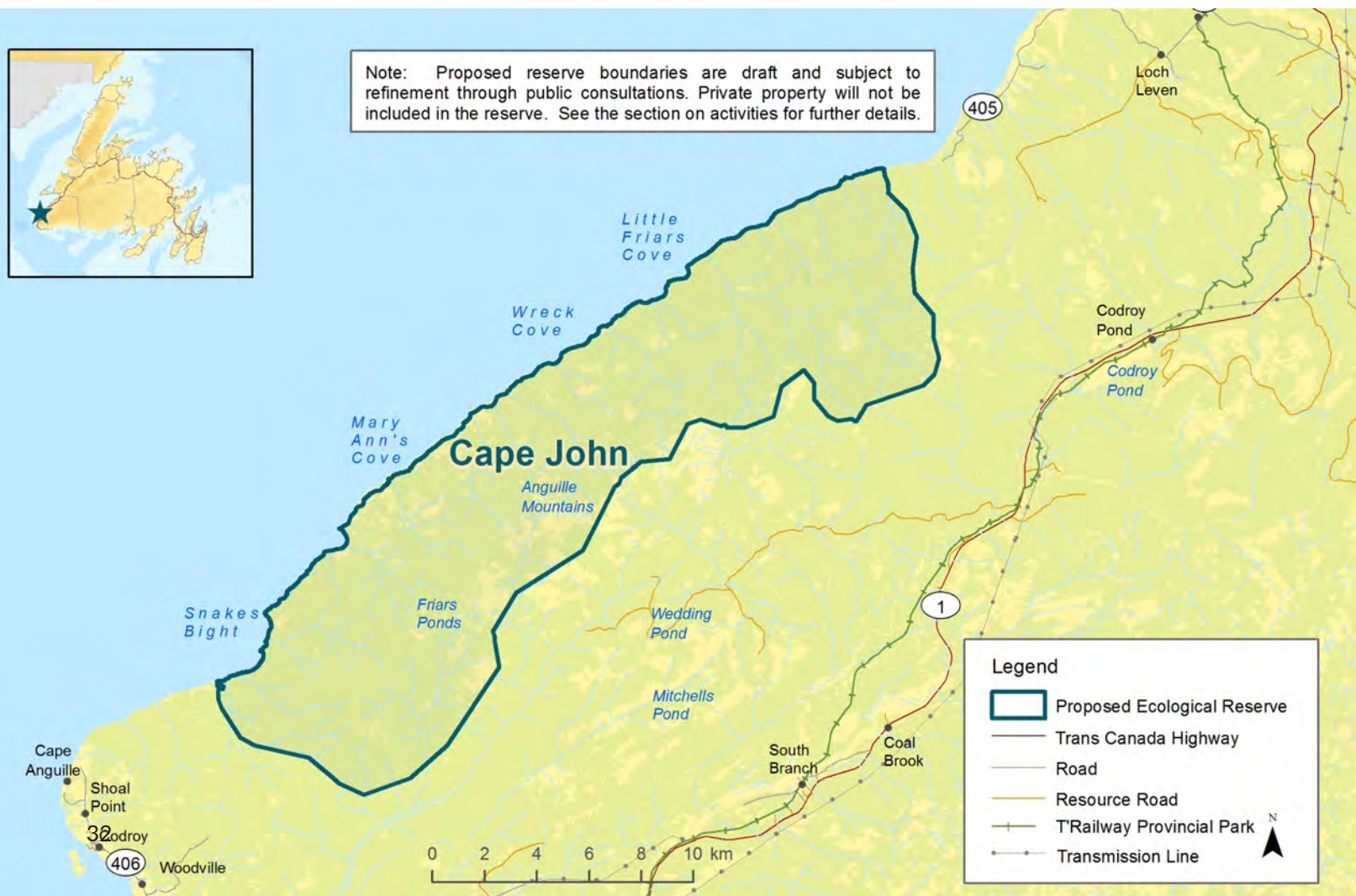
Size: 213 km²

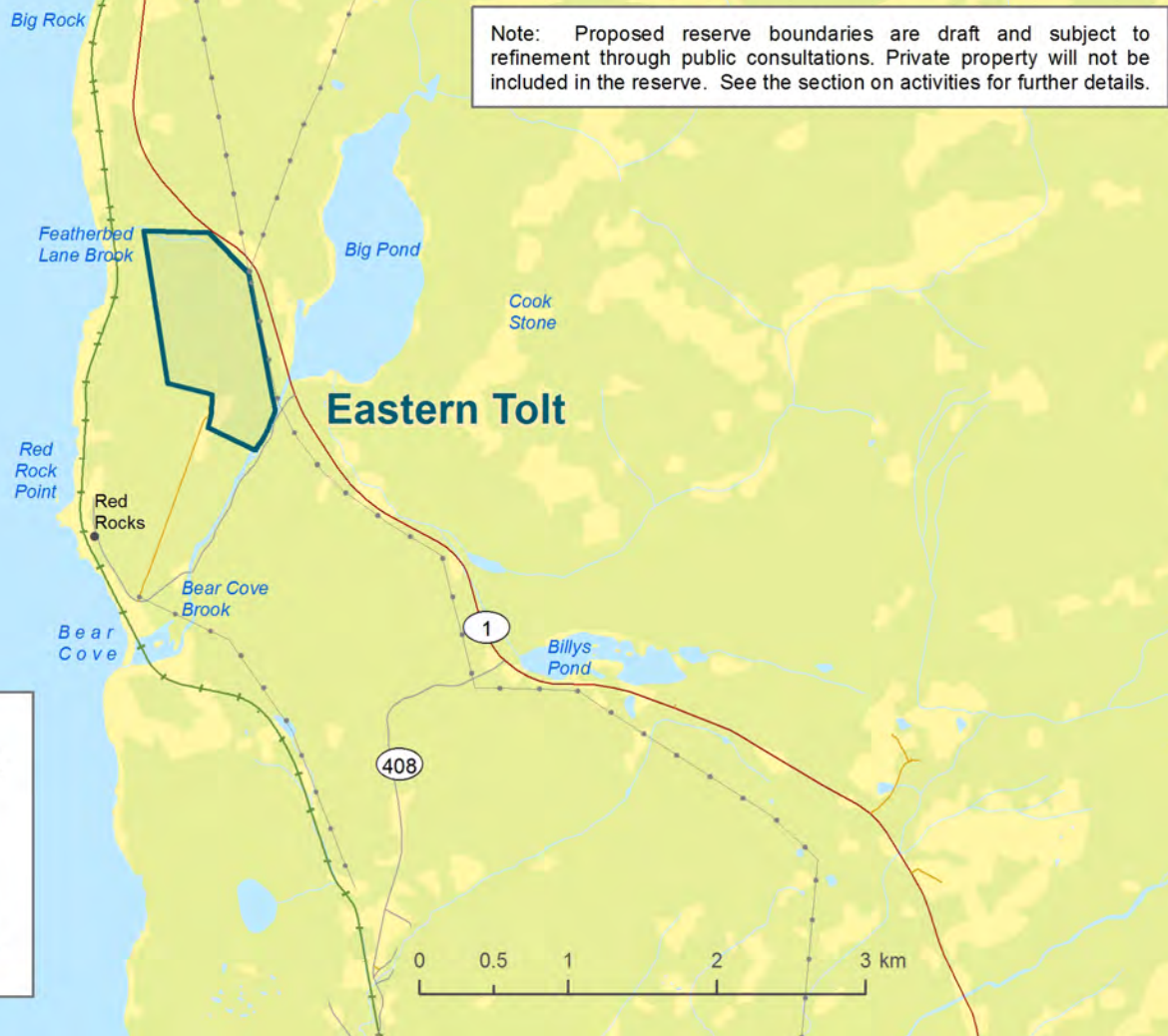
Location: Southwestern Newfoundland, just north of the Codroy Valley

Type: Representative (Component II)

The coastal scenery of Cape John is spectacular. This proposed protected area extends along a remote stretch of coastline and includes the western side of the Anguille Mountains. Cape John's rugged coastal valleys contain forests that have been shaped by the strong winds that are so frequent in this part of the province. The forests are predominately Balsam Fir, often with ferns and mosses in the understory.

Yellow Birch and some Trembling Aspen are also present. In the upper parts of the watersheds are barrens that have been heavily impacted by off-road vehicle use. However, for the most part Cape John is without roads and relatively intact. This proposed protected area provides representation of the Western Newfoundland Forest natural region (subregion 1e).





Eastern Tolt

Ecological Reserve

Size: 0.8 km²

Location: West of the Trans Canada Highway north of the community of Cape Ray

Type: Special Feature (Component III)

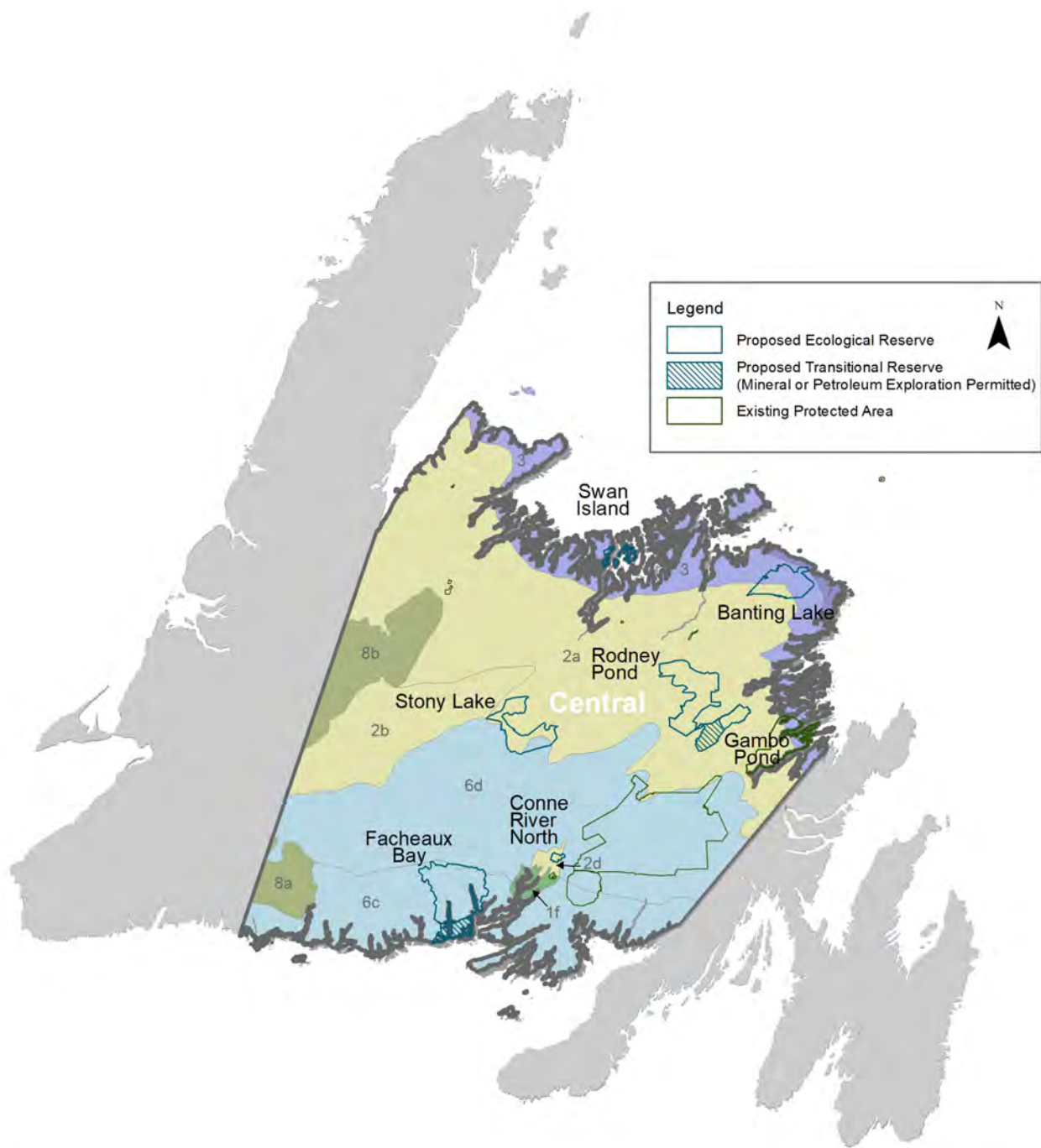
Eastern Tolt protects a small parcel of land in an extremely windy area known as ‘the Wreckhouse’. These notoriously strong winds have played a part in making the site ecologically special by helping create globally-rare wave forests. The wave forests at Eastern Tolt are composed of alternating

bands of dead and living Balsam Fir trees. These bands stretch across the steep hillside and each ‘wave’ of trees becomes more stunted with increasing elevation. Eastern Tolt contains some of the most visible and accessible wave forests in the world.

Central Newfoundland

The central region is home to the largest Woodland Caribou herd on the Island. Bay du Nord Wilderness Reserve, the largest protected area on the Island, provides ample hunting, fishing and back-country experiences. The central region has a wide range of habitat types, from the heavily forested and fire-disturbed interior, to the vast and wild barrens throughout, the exposed sheer cliffs and deep bays of the south coast, countless near shore islands and the north coast's sandy beaches. The majestic and rare Red Pine is found primarily in this region. This part of the Island has the warmest summers and coldest winters. Because this region is so heavily forested, it has seen relatively high levels of commercial forestry activity and road development. There is also extensive hydroelectric development throughout the region.





Natural Regions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Western Newfoundland Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. Serpentine Range Subregion 1b. Corner Brook Subregion 1c. Port au Port Subregion 1d. St. George's Bay Subregion 1e. Codroy Subregion 1f. Bay d'Espoir Subregion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Northern Peninsula Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4a. Coastal Plain Subregion 4b. Beaver Brook Limestone Subregion 4c. Northern Coastal Subregion 4d. Eastern Long Range Subregion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Eastern Hyper-Oceanic Barrens
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Central Newfoundland Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2a. Northcentral Subregion 2b. Red Indian Lake Subregion 2c. Portage Pond Subregion 2d. Twillick Steady Subregion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Avalon Forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Long Range Barrens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8a. Southern Long Range Subregion 8b. Buchans Plateau-Topsail Subregion 8c. Northern Long Range Subregion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. North Shore Forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Maritime Barrens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6a. Northeastern Barrens Subregion 6b. Southeastern Barrens Subregion 6c. South Coast Barrens Subregion 6d. Central Barrens Subregion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Strait Of Belle Isle Barrens

Swan Island

Ecological Reserve

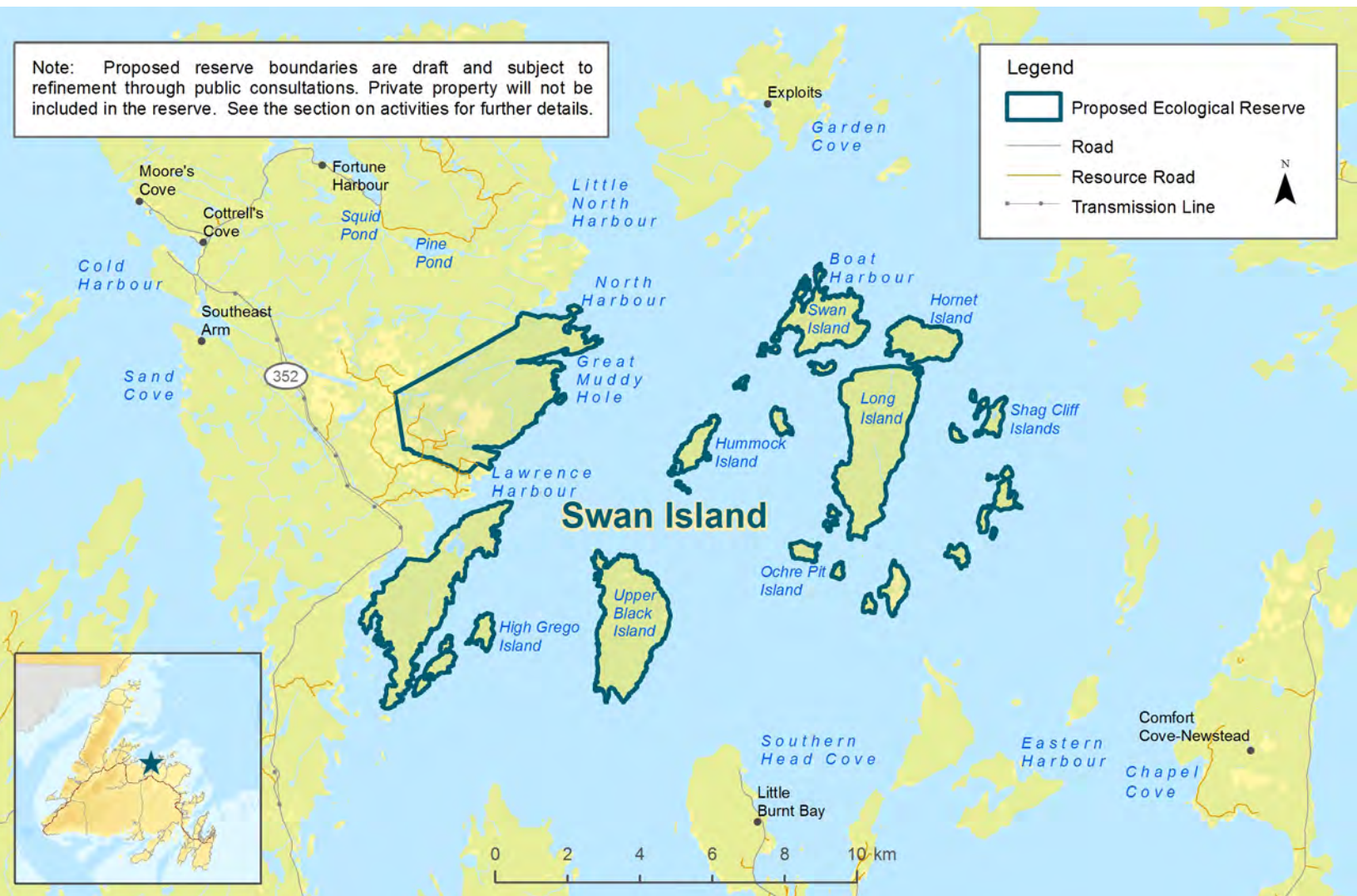
Size: 42 km²

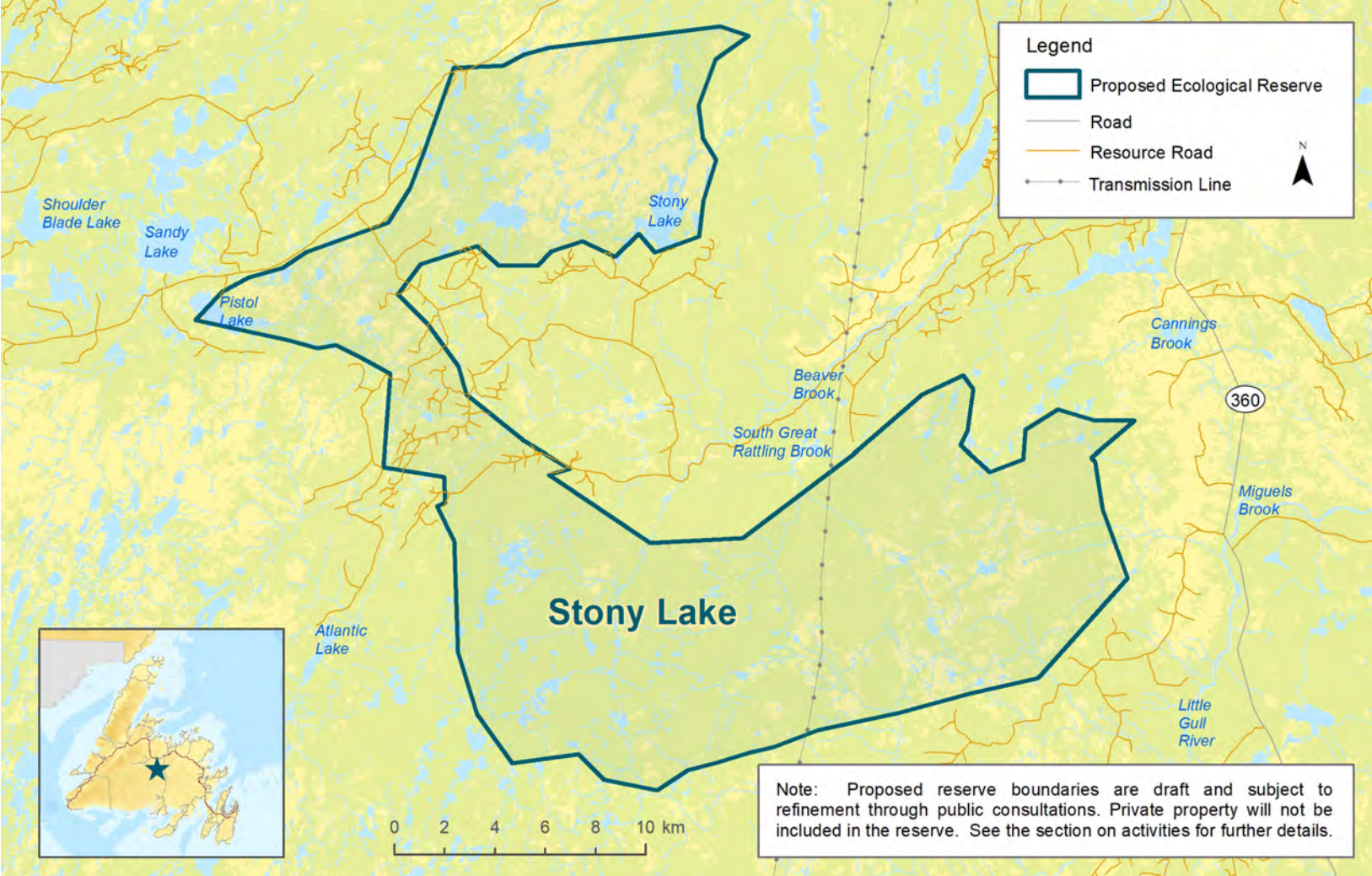
Location: Bay of Exploits (Notre Dame Bay), north of Lewisporte

Type: Representative (Component II)

The Swan Island proposed protected area is named after one of the larger islands in this beautiful archipelago of approximately 20 islands, the majority of which are forested. In the mainland portion of Swan Island proposed reserve there are soil barrens, bogs, and stunted forest. The forests of Swan Island consist of spruce, larch, birch, poplar and aspen, and are representative of the North Shore Forest

natural region. Coastal areas tend to have higher levels of development pressure. However, this proposed coastal protected area is one of the most intact areas found within this natural region. There are some forestry resource roads and previously harvested areas on the mainland, and recreational cabins occur throughout the proposed protected area.





Stony Lake

Ecological Reserve

Size: 406 km²

Location: West of the Bay D’Espoir Highway, central Newfoundland

Type: Representative (Component II)

Stony Lake is located in the ecologically important transition zone between two different natural regions: the Central Newfoundland Forest and the Maritime Barrens (subregion 2a and 6d). Together with the other proposed protected areas in these natural regions, Stony Lake provides important representation of natural features. Most of this proposed protected area is typical of the many barrens and wetlands found in this part of the Island.

Patches of undisturbed and regenerating productive Balsam Fir forest and stunted softwoods are found throughout the site. North and South Great Rattling Brooks flow through the proposed protected area. Stony Lake contains some forestry resource roads and previously harvested areas which will regenerate over time. Stony Lake provides important habitat for Woodland Caribou.

Conne River North

Ecological Reserve

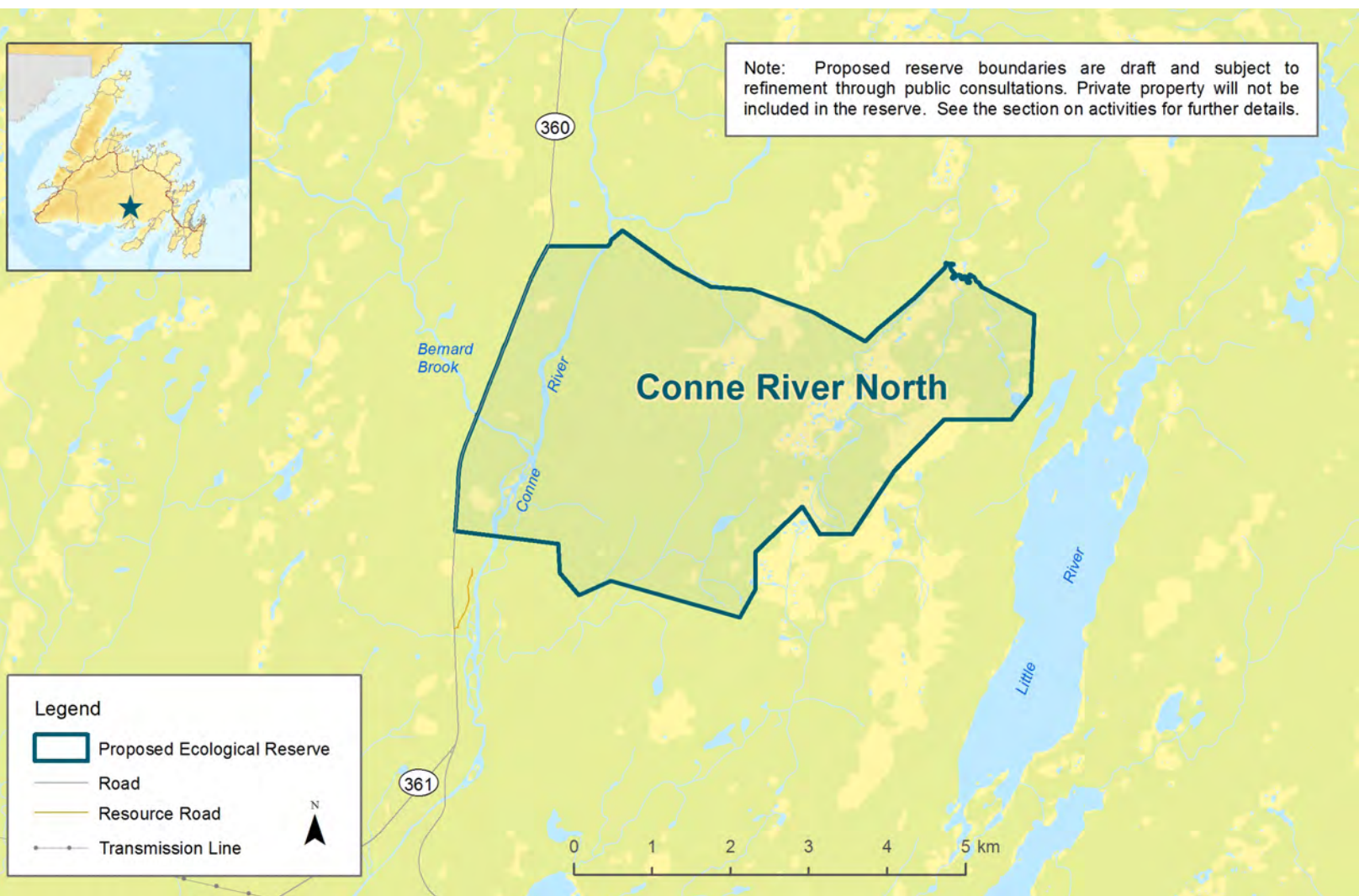
Size: 22 km²

Location: East of the Bay d'Espoir highway, northeast of Conne River

Type: Representative (Component II)

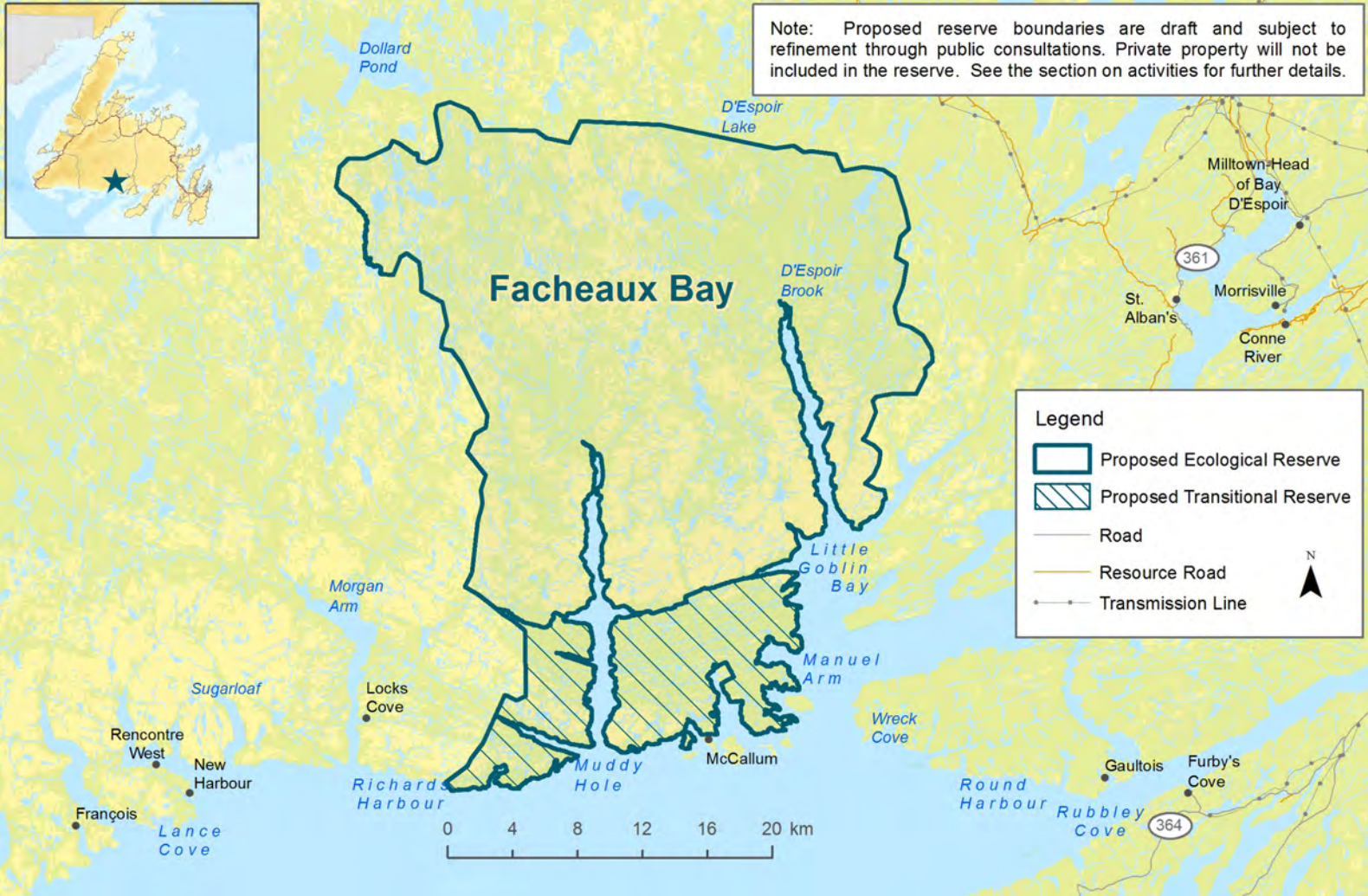
A few of the deep river valleys and inlets along the south coast of Newfoundland reach far enough inland that the conditions are favourable for tree growth. The Conne River North proposed protected area is situated just north of the largest of these inlets (Bay d'Espoir). The proposed protected area represents forests in this unique area which is heavily influenced by the moist air along the coast. The forests of Conne River North are predominantly Balsam Fir (the typical forest type in this natural region);

White Birch and scattered Black Spruce are also present. Conne River North contains riparian habitat (i.e. habitat adjacent to rivers and streams) along a portion of the Conne River in the west, as well as extensive wetlands in the eastern portion. Conne River North is relatively intact with few trails and very little history of commercial forest harvesting. This proposed protected area provides representation of a unique subregion of the Central Newfoundland Forest natural region (subregion 2d).





Note: Proposed reserve boundaries are draft and subject to refinement through public consultations. Private property will not be included in the reserve. See the section on activities for further details.



Facheaux Bay

Ecological Reserve and Transitional Reserve

Size: 900 km² (762 km² Ecological Reserve; 138 km² Transitional Reserve)

Location: South coast of Newfoundland, just north of McCallum

Type: Representative (Component II)

Facheaux Bay contains the majority of two full watersheds that run southward to the Atlantic Ocean. This area includes many of the vegetation types typical of the barrens along Newfoundland's south coast. The two most common heath types, *Empetrum* (Blackberry) and *Kalmia* (Sheep laurel, Lambkill) heaths, are found on large tracts of exposed rocky highlands. Alpine heath, typical of the more exposed headlands along the coast, is represented in the proposed transitional reserve. Facheaux Bay proposed protected area also contains a couple of deep river valleys with Balsam Fir forest intermixed with Yellow Birch and rare White Pine. This species mix and proximity to the cool, damp

south coast makes these patches of forest rather unique on the Island. The northern part of the proposed protected area contains important core habitat for the declining Grey River Woodland Caribou herd during the winter and fall seasons, as well as some summer habitat. There is very little human disturbance in the area. This proposed protected area provides representation of the Maritime Barrens natural region (subregion 6c). A portion of Facheaux Bay is proposed as a transitional reserve. Under this designation, mineral exploration is permitted to continue for a period of 10 years, after which the intention is that the area will be protected as an ecological reserve.

Banting Lake

Ecological Reserve

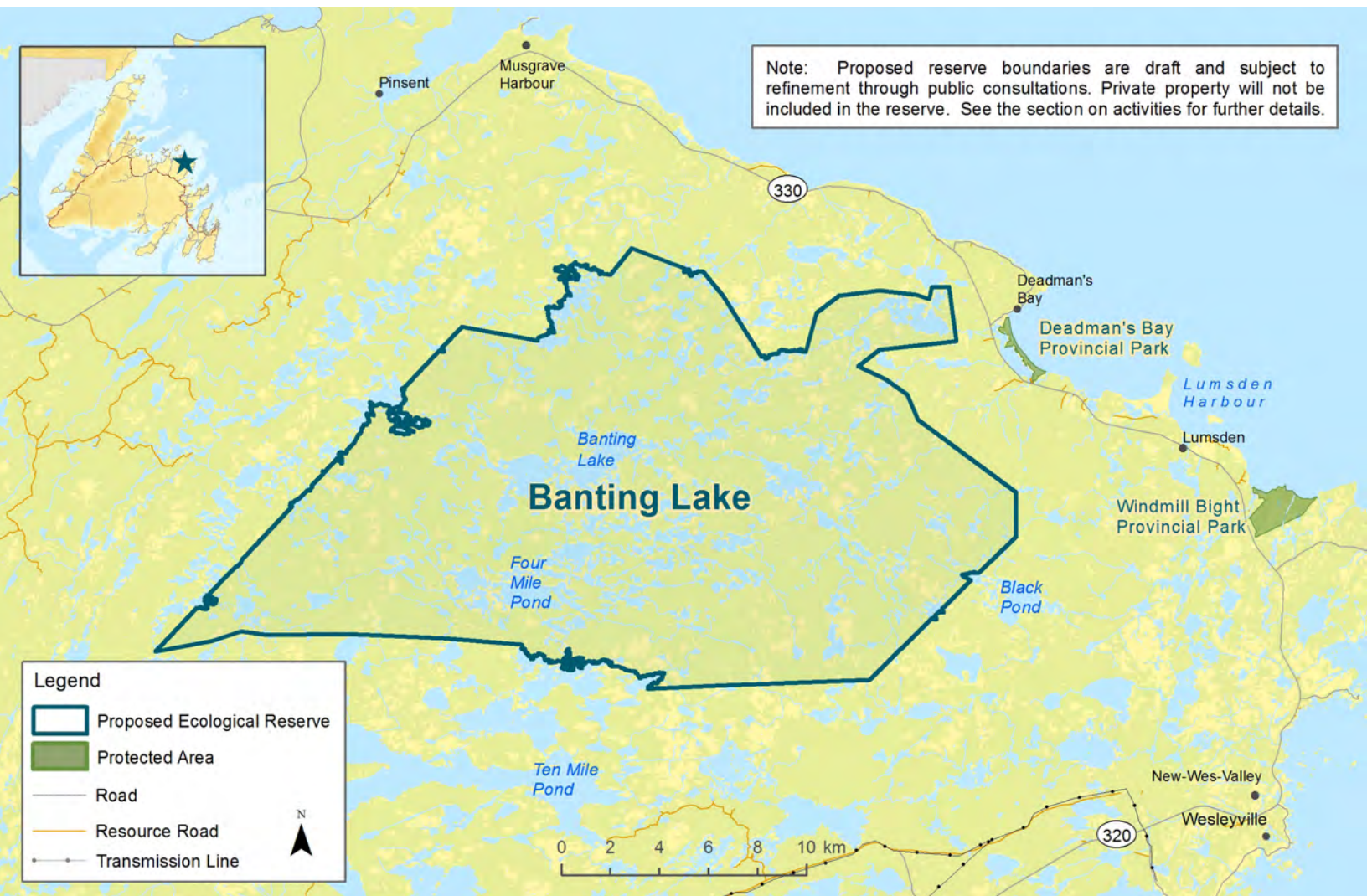
Size: 374 km²

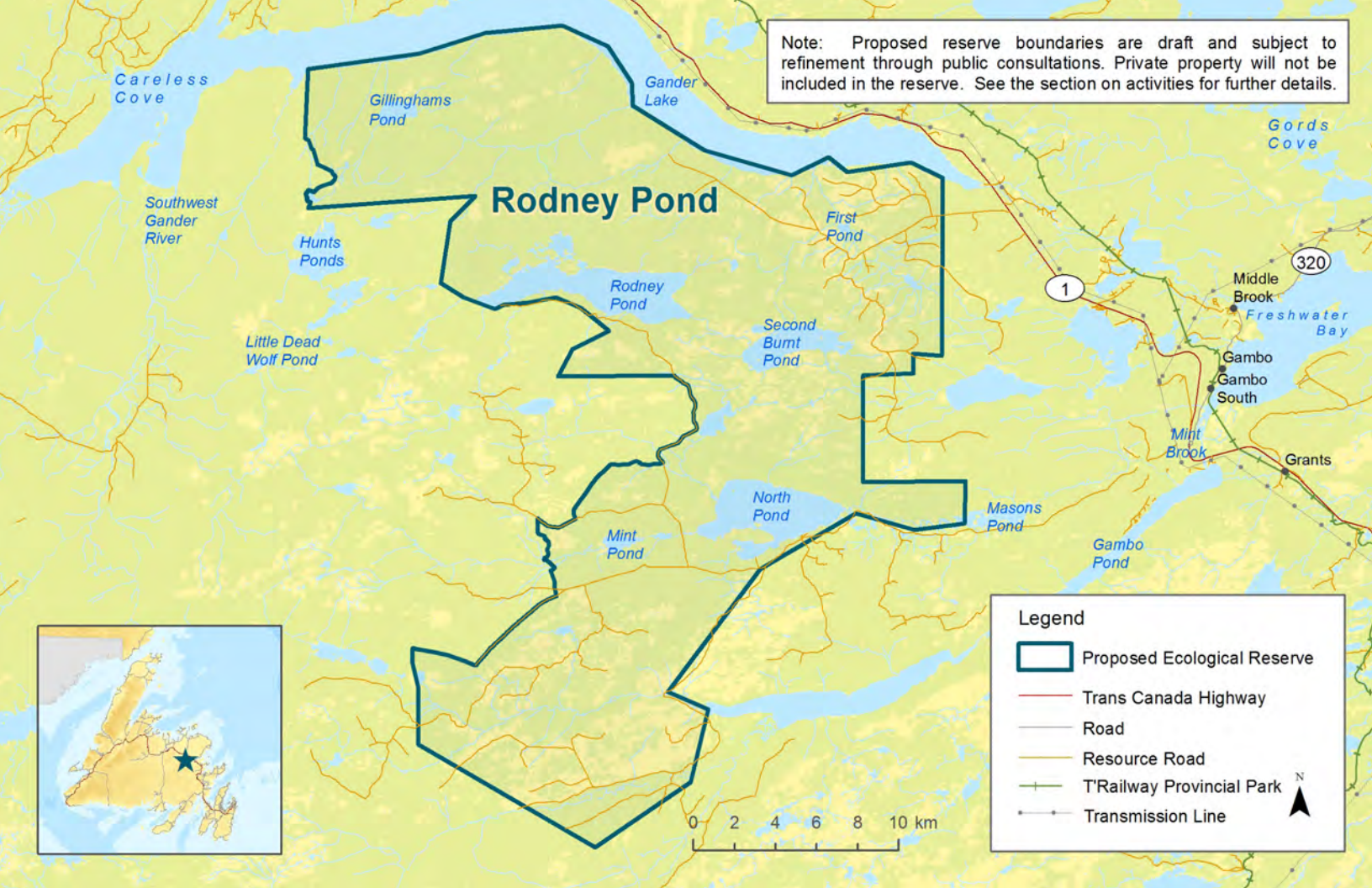
Location: Northeast coast (Straight Shore), west of Lumsden

Type: Representative (Component II)

Banting Lake is an example of a fire-disturbed ecosystem in the North Shore Forest natural region. A lightning strike in 1961 caused a forest fire which burned the area so intensely that the impacts can still be seen today. The proposed protected area consists primarily of barrens, forest stands of Black Spruce and Larch (Juniper), and many bogs and peatlands.

Banting Lake provides representation of the North Shore Forest natural region. This natural region has been highly impacted by extensive road development. However, the proposed area is roadless and relatively undisturbed, apart from some off-road vehicle damage which has occurred on many of the wetlands.





Rodney Pond

Ecological Reserve

Size: 580 km²

Location: South of Gander Lake, central Newfoundland

Type: Representative (Component II)

Rodney Pond includes some of the last remaining forested area in Central Newfoundland that has not been extensively roaded and mechanically harvested. Part of the site is densely forested with both young and old stands of Balsam Fir and Black Spruce. Wetlands (raised bogs) and large ponds dot the landscape. There are some forestry resource roads and previously harvested areas in the eastern and southern portions of the proposed protected area which will regenerate over

time. The Central Newfoundland Forest varies considerably from west to east in climate, dominant tree species, and primary forest disturbance mechanism. Rodney Pond provides representation of the Central Newfoundland Forest natural region (subregion 2a), but is small relative to the large natural region. Together with the other proposed protected areas in this natural region, Rodney Pond is key to providing representation of this forested natural region.

Gambo Pond

Ecological Reserve and Transitional Reserve

Size: 244 km² (101 km² Ecological Reserve; 143 km² Transitional Reserve)

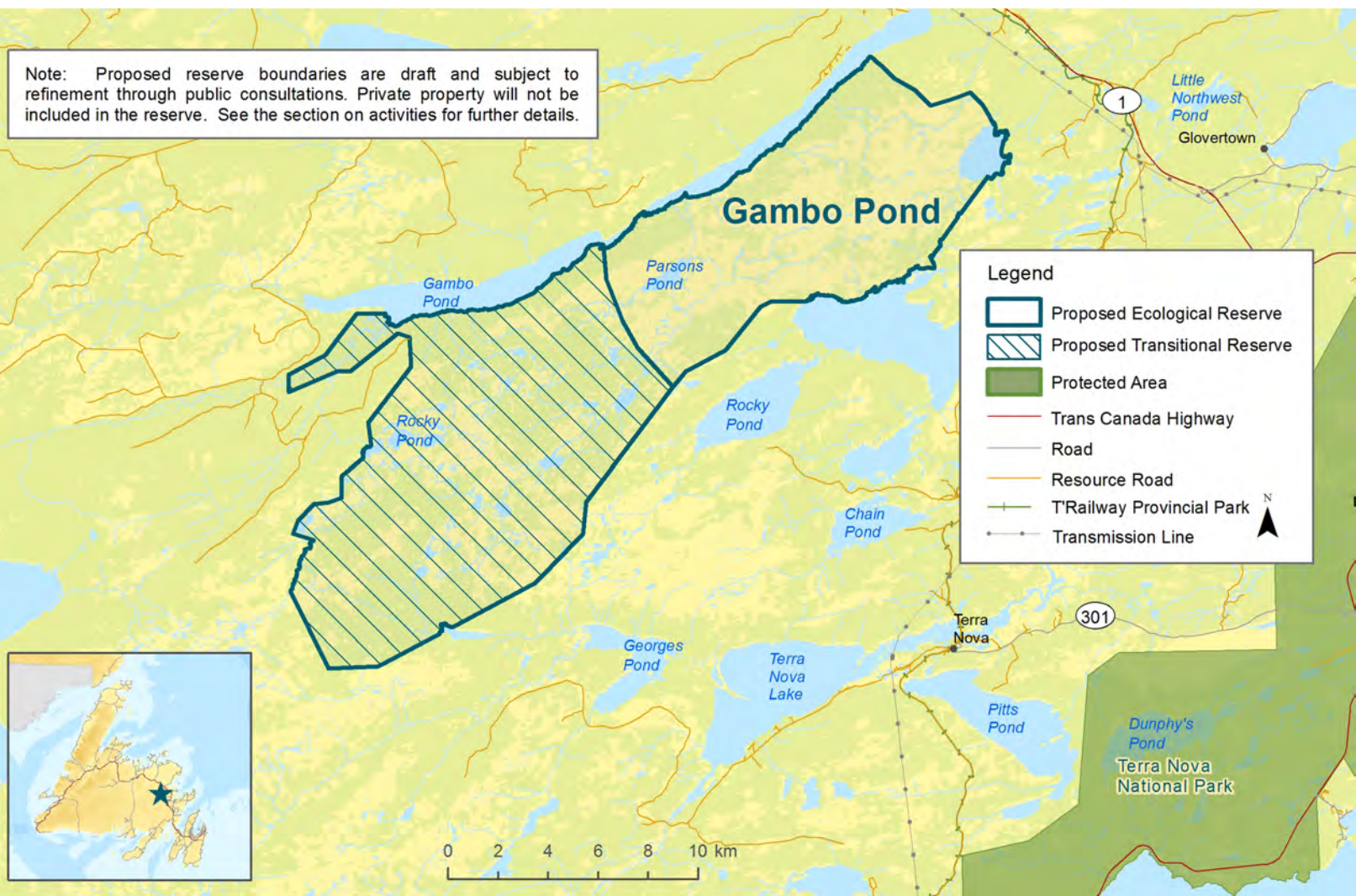
Location: South of Gambo Pond in central Newfoundland

Type: Representative (Component II)

Wildfire is one of the primary means of forest renewal for Central Newfoundland forests. Gambo Pond is an example of a fire-disturbed forest, which was burned in 1979 and again in 1998. The forests of this proposed protected area and transitional reserve are mainly stunted softwoods and regenerating Black Spruce forest. Scattered Red Pine, a rare tree species in Newfoundland forests, are found throughout. Kalmia barrens and bogs are also present.

Gambo Pond provides representation of the very large and diverse Central Newfoundland Forest natural region (subregion 2a). The southern part of Gambo Pond is proposed as a transitional reserve. Under this designation, mineral exploration is permitted to continue for a period of 10 years, after which the intention is that the area will be protected as an ecological reserve.

Note: Proposed reserve boundaries are draft and subject to refinement through public consultations. Private property will not be included in the reserve. See the section on activities for further details.





Eastern Newfoundland

The eastern region is made up of the Bonavista, Burin, and Avalon Peninsulas and adjacent islands. This part of the Island is home to some of the world's most spectacular seabird breeding colonies, such as the Northern Gannet colony at Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve and North America's largest colony of Atlantic Puffins at Witless Bay Ecological Reserve. Most of this region is coastal, windswept, foggy, and wet. Summers are cool and winters are mild. Extensive barrens of dwarf shrubs such as blueberries and crowberries occur here, and are intermixed with numerous bogs and ponds. Relatively smaller areas of Balsam Fir forest can be found here as well. This region is home to numerous rare lichens. Rare plants are found in arctic alpine habitats on hilltops in the region, such as those at Hawke Hill Ecological Reserve. The majority of our province's population is found in the provincial capital of St. John's, which in turn means a relatively high level of habitat disturbance and human footprint on the landscape close to urban centres.





Natural Regions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Western Newfoundland Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. Serpentine Range Subregion 1b. Corner Brook Subregion 1c. Port au Port Subregion 1d. St. George's Bay Subregion 1e. Codroy Subregion 1f. Bay d'Espoir Subregion 2. Central Newfoundland Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2a. Northcentral Subregion 2b. Red Indian Lake Subregion 2c. Portage Pond Subregion 2d. Twillick Steady Subregion 3. North Shore Forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Northern Peninsula Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4a. Coastal Plain Subregion 4b. Beaver Brook Limestone Subregion 4c. Northern Coastal Subregion 4d. Eastern Long Range Subregion 5. Avalon Forest 6. Maritime Barrens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6a. Northeastern Barrens Subregion 6b. Southeastern Barrens Subregion 6c. South Coast Barrens Subregion 6d. Central Barrens Subregion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Eastern Hyper-Oceanic Barrens 8. Long Range Barrens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8a. Southern Long Range Subregion 8b. Buchans Plateau-Topsail Subregion 8c. Northern Long Range Subregion 9. Strait Of Belle Isle Barrens

Random Island

Ecological Reserve

Size: 180 km²

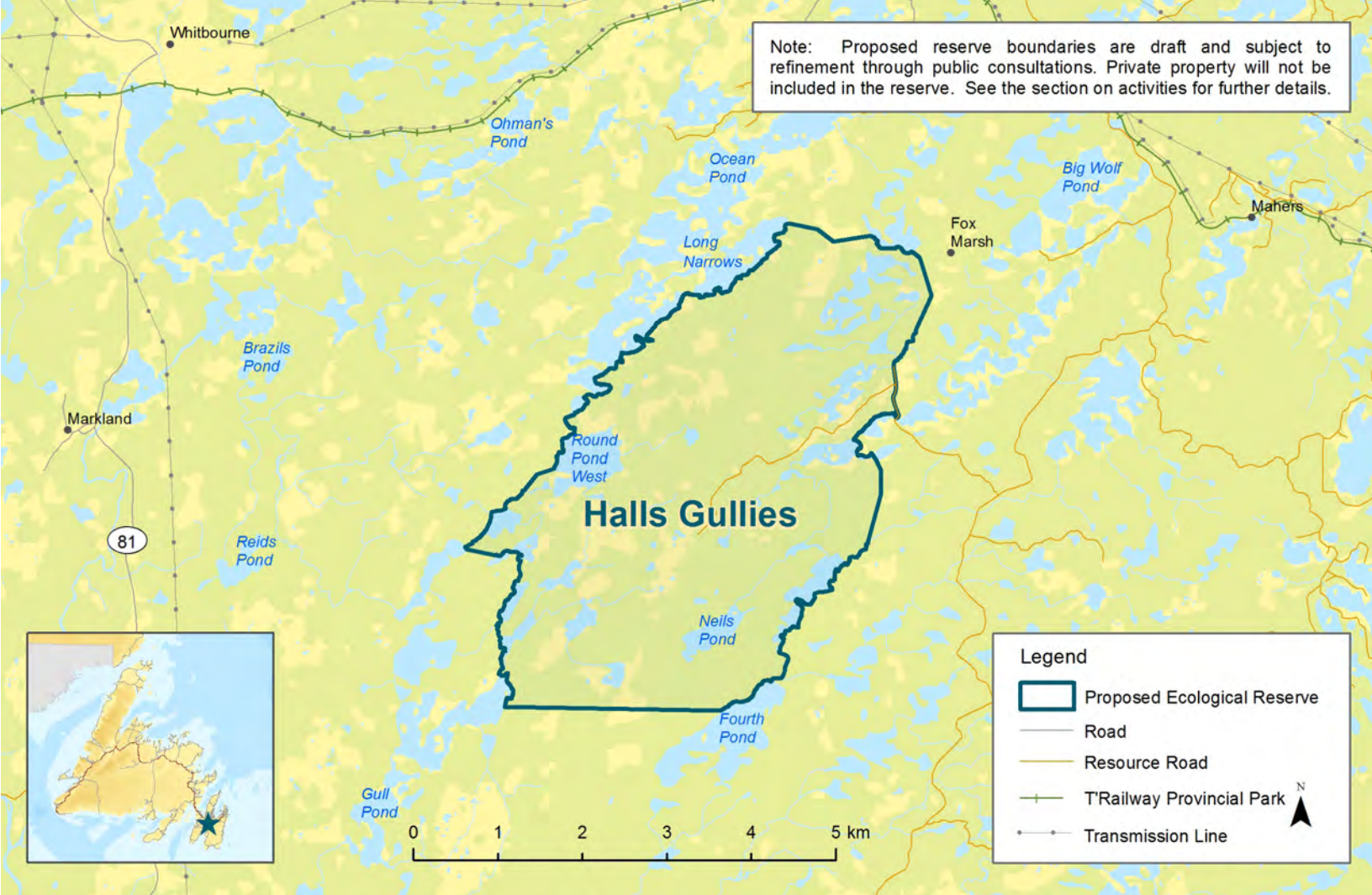
Location: Northeast of Burgoyne's Cove and eastern Random Island

Type: Representative (Component II)

The Random Island proposed protected area is a rugged coastal site containing the full range of features typical of the Maritime Barrens natural region (subregion 6a). The area is dominated by barrens consisting mainly of *Kalmia* (Lambskill, Sheep Laurel) and *Empetrum* (Blackberry) heaths. Patches of tuckamore are scattered throughout. Balsam Fir and Black Spruce forests are found in more sheltered and productive

pockets. Coastal headlands, slope bogs and basin bogs are all present and are important features of the natural region. A small herd of Woodland Caribou was introduced in 1964 and has grown to approximately 40 animals today. This proposed protected area provides representation of the Maritime Barrens natural region.





Halls Gullies

Ecological Reserve

Size: 19 km²

Location: Southeast of Whitbourne on the Avalon Peninsula

Type: Special Feature (Component III)

Halls Gullies is one of only two locations in the province with populations of and critical habitat for the endangered Vole Ears Lichen. The proposed protected area is characterized by numerous wetlands interspersed with Balsam Fir forest. The combination of habitat and climate

creates very humid conditions that are ideal for growth of many species of lichen. Given the very limited distribution and endangered status of this lichen, Halls Gullies is key to the survival of this species in the province and in Canada.

Ripple Pond

Ecological Reserve

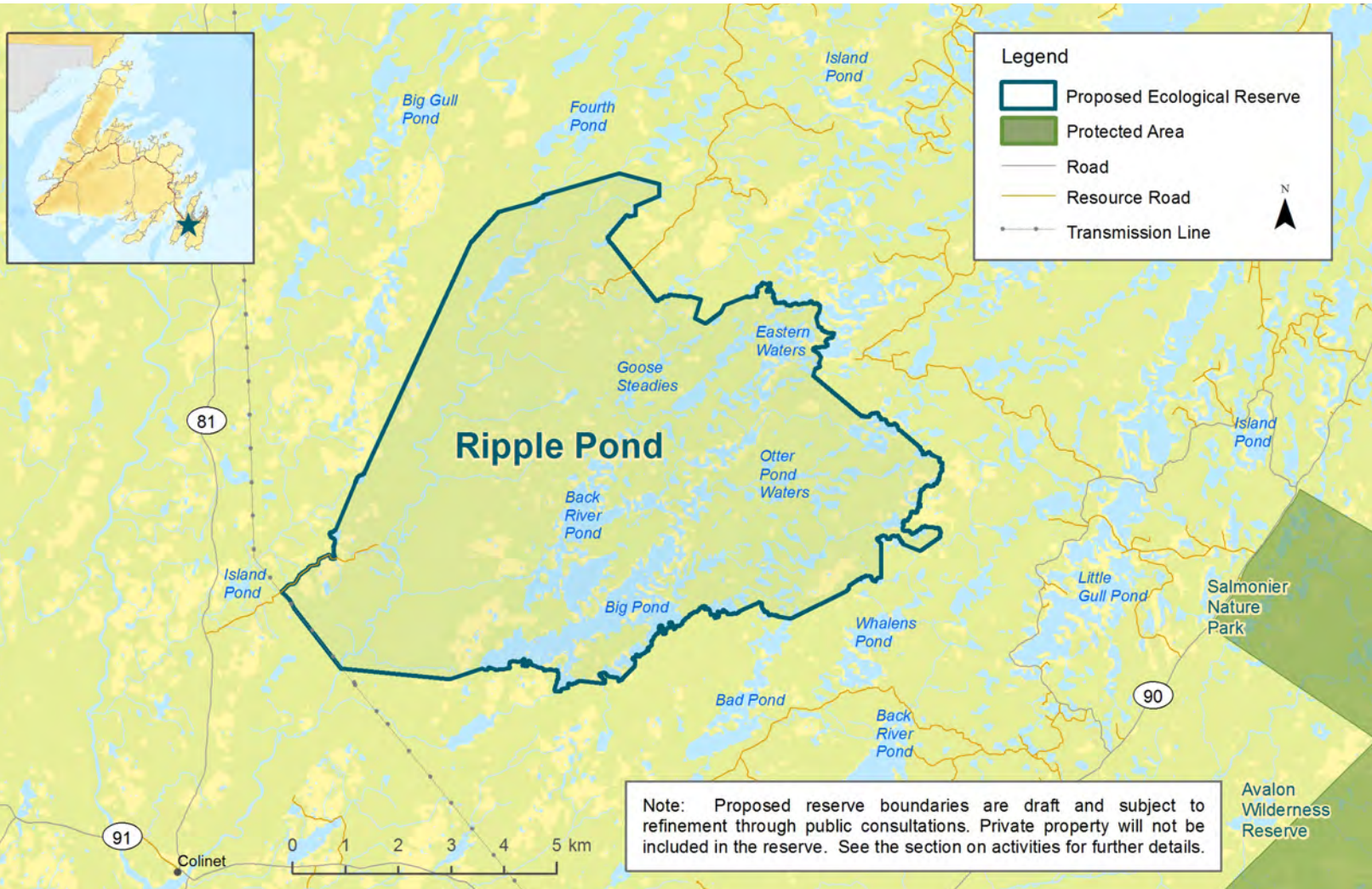
Size: 70 km²

Location: Central Avalon, west of the Salmonier Line

Type: Representative (Component II)

The Ripple Pond proposed protected area encompasses the largest intact undisturbed area remaining of the Avalon Forest natural region. The area provides representation for all key characteristics of this natural region. Ribbed moraines (large wavy ridges created by glaciers) are a significant landscape feature that is well represented in Ripple Pond. Forests throughout the proposed protected area include Balsam Fir with Yellow Birch on the northern slopes, and scrubby Balsam Fir and Black Spruce

forests with Canada Yew in the understory on the southern slopes. The moist climate and fog that are typical of this area create a forest rich in lichens, many of them rare. Ripple Pond includes a significant portion of the Colinet River watershed and its important wetlands. The proposed protected area is largely unroaded despite the natural region being under great pressure for development and access. There is some damage to wetlands due to All-Terrain Vehicle use in the southern part of Ripple Pond.





St. Shotts

Ecological Reserve

Size: 53 km²

Location: Avalon Peninsula, east side of St. Mary's Bay, north of St. Shotts

Type: Representative (Component II)

The St. Shotts proposed protected area represents a unique natural region - the Eastern Hyper-Oceanic Barrens. This natural region is found only along the barren coasts of some peninsulas in eastern Newfoundland. The rolling terrain of St. Shotts is covered in large part by short, dense carpets of mosses and lichens and

patches of tuckamore. Blackberry (*Empetrum*) heath is also common. The exposed, coastal areas provide habitat for arctic-alpine plants that normally are found much farther north or at higher elevations. Large blanket bogs are found in the upper reaches of the three smaller drainages found in the proposed protected area.





Moving Forward

'Lift up your hearts
Each new hour holds new chances
For new beginnings.'
Maya Angelou in Inaugural Poem

Public perspectives are key to creating a protected area network for both nature and people. Building this system of protected areas for the Island of Newfoundland will be a significant step towards protecting our province for generations to come. The process of establishing this suite of protected areas will take time. Information will need to be gathered and shared on the establishment of each protected area. Therefore, each of the proposed protected areas will be given interim protection to ensure that they are protected from development while the formal public consultation process gets underway.

While the areas being proposed for protection are currently on the Island, WERAC anticipates that conservation planning for Labrador will be undertaken through a collaborative process including all people of Labrador.

The Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act (WER Act) is the governing legislation for wilderness and ecological reserves in Newfoundland and Labrador. The WER Act outlines a process and timelines for establishment of individual protected areas. It is widely considered to be one of the best pieces of protected areas legislation in Canada because public engagement is a requirement. The Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council (WERAC) facilitates this process. WERAC's role is to advise government on establishment and management of wilderness and ecological reserves in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Any areas being proposed as a wilderness or ecological reserve in Newfoundland and Labrador must go through the legislated public engagement process led by WERAC.



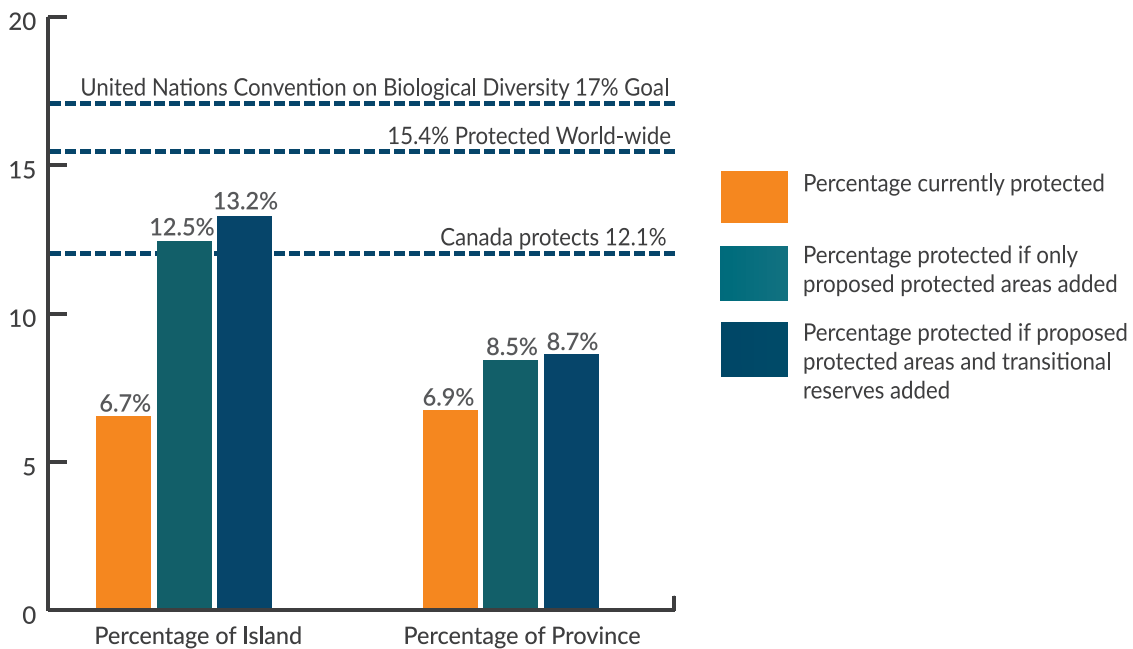
To begin the reserve establishment process, WERAC gathers information from the public about the proposed reserve and current uses of the area. Once government establishes the area as a provisional reserve, the formal public consultation process begins. Public perspectives and recommendations from these public consultations inform the development of a draft management plan and a proposed final boundary. After the public consultation phase is complete, WERAC submits a recommendations report on whether to establish a reserve and how it should be managed. Government makes the final decision, and if approved, the reserve is formally established.

Transitional reserves are lands intended for future protection under the WER Act, but where mineral and petroleum exploration are permitted

to continue in the short term. If no significant mineral or petroleum discovery is made within 10 years, the sites will then be transitioned to protection as wilderness or ecological reserves through the regular WER Act process.

The **Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland** guides the creation of 24 new protected areas, and the expansion of two protected areas on the Island of Newfoundland. This will ultimately increase the level of protection to 12.5 per cent for the Island and 8.5 per cent for the province. With the later inclusion of six transitional reserves under the WER Act, protection will then increase to 13.2 per cent for the Island and 8.7 per cent for the province. The plan increases levels of protection for 19 of 25 natural regions (see page 65 for a map of percentages by natural region).

How does the Protected Areas Plan help us reach our goals?





Activities within Proposed Areas

Protecting an area as a reserve means that the area is kept intact for the use and enjoyment of people now and for generations to come. Many outdoor activities, like snowshoeing, hiking, skiing and photography are encouraged in reserves. Certain activities may be restricted in a reserve or in certain sensitive areas with the intent to protect the ecological integrity of the reserve. The following section outlines a typical approach to management of activities in a reserve. Each protected area is unique; a management plan is developed in consultation with local users to accommodate existing uses that align with conservation of the area.



Main River Waterway Provincial Park

Commercial Forestry, Mining and Agriculture

Large-scale, industrial uses such as agriculture, commercial forestry (including the construction of new roads) and mining (including prospecting and claim-staking) are not permitted in a wilderness or ecological reserve. In transitional reserves, staking new mineral claims or issuance of new petroleum licences will be allowed to continue for 4 years from the time of establishment. For a maximum period of 10 years from the time of establishment, mineral and petroleum exploration or development will be permitted. After this period the sites will then be transitioned to protection as wilderness or ecological reserves through the regular WER Act process, except where there is a proven and significant mineral or petroleum resource discovered during the 10 year period. Appropriate regulations will be put in place to minimize ecological impacts and maintain the value of an area for protection as a reserve.

Hunting and Fishing

Hunting and fishing are permitted in wilderness reserves. These activities may be permitted in ecological reserves, where they do not conflict with the purpose for which the reserve was established or negatively affect other sensitive features. Hunting birds in a seabird ecological reserve, for example, would not be permitted. The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations regarding hunting, fishing and snaring in a proposed reserve.

Berrypicking and Mushroom picking

Berrypicking and mushroom picking are generally permitted in all reserves. There could be restrictions where there are sensitive features like rare plants. The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations regarding whether these activities should continue in a proposed reserve.



Camping

Camping generally is permitted within reserves, although some areas are simply too sensitive to withstand this degree of human activity. The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about whether camping should be permitted and if there should be any restrictions associated with camping (e.g., time limits; only in certain areas, etc.).

Boil-ups and Campfires

Boil-ups or building a campfire may be permitted to continue in a reserve provided it does not conflict with the purpose for which the reserve was established or negatively affect other sensitive features. Building fires would not be permitted in a botanical ecological reserve in order to protect plants. The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about whether there should be any restrictions associated with boil-ups or campfires. There may be restrictions on cutting wood. Please see the next subsection for more information.

Cutting Firewood

Protecting undisturbed forest is an important part of the Plan. Where there are existing domestic harvest blocks, cutting at present permit levels can be grandfathered in to a new wilderness or ecological reserve. This means it would be available to existing users with the likely intent that the activity be phased out over time (i.e. no new permits would be issued). New domestic firewood blocks would not be permitted. Collection of firewood for campfires and boil-ups can be permitted to continue except in areas where it conflicts with the purpose for which the reserve is established (for example, firewood collecting and fires are not permitted in West Brook Ecological Reserve, which protects one of the last remaining Red Fir stands in the province). The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about cutting firewood and any associated restrictions.

Cabins

Cabins on private land will be excluded from reserves. Cabin owners on Crown lands with a valid License to Occupy would still be able to maintain or improve their cabin provided they do not increase the footprint of the structure (i.e., clearing additional land, building additional buildings, or building on to an existing building). However, buildings being constructed at the time of reserve establishment could be completed. Cabin owners would still be able to sell their cabin. The potential change in value of a property due to it being within a protected area is unknown. A recommendation could also be made during public consultations to exclude a cabin from a reserve. Information on travel within a reserve is provided in following sections. If you have a cabin or land in a proposed reserve please get in touch to discuss your interests through the contact information on page 62.

Outfitting

Outfitters currently located within a reserve at the time of formal establishment would be permitted to continue to operate. The outfitter would need to apply for an annual commercial operator permit (at no cost) and there would be limitations on increasing the overall footprint of their buildings and operation. Being located in a protected area would mean that the outfitting grounds would be protected from development. A recommendation could be made to exclude an outfitting building from a reserve. If you have an outfitting cabin or operation within or partly within a proposed reserve, please get in touch to discuss your interests through the contact information on page 62. For more information on accessing your outfitting camp in a reserve, please see below.

New operators, particularly low impact, naturebased tourism operations, could be permitted within a reserve, however any structures associated with that operation would need to be located outside of the reserve.





Snowmobiling in proposed Cloud River protected area (the Tickle)

Motorized Vehicles

Generally, motorized vehicles are not permitted in a reserve. Efforts are made to exclude roads during establishment and no new roads can be developed in a reserve. The legislation can allow for the continuation of certain types of access if it took place prior to the reserve being established. In some cases, for example with pre-existing roads in the Avalon Wilderness Reserve and Burnt Cape Ecological Reserve, motorized vehicles can be permitted. That being said, protected areas are most resilient when they are not fragmented by roads. The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about the inclusion of roads and motorized vehicle access in a proposed reserve.

Snowmobiling

Snowmobiling may be permitted depending on whether this activity took place prior to reserve establishment. The activity should not conflict with the purpose for which a reserve was established. For example, snowmobiling is permitted in Bay du Nord Wilderness Reserve, in areas outside of the winter range of Woodland Caribou. The public is invited to make recommendations during public consultations about snowmobiling in a reserve as well as any possible restrictions for sensitive areas, environmental impact or public enjoyment (e.g. only on existing recognized trails, only on ground that has a good snow cover, no-go zones).

Boating

Motorized boating is permitted in some reserves where it doesn't conflict with the purpose for which the reserve was established. For example, boating is permitted within the Avalon Wilderness Reserve, where outboard motors of up to six horsepower can be used on ponds that are accessible by road.

The use of non-motorized boats such as canoes or kayaks would generally be permitted. Motorized personal watercraft are not permitted in a reserve. There are significant noise and disturbance impacts as well as environmental pollution associated with these types of crafts.

The public is invited to make a recommendation during public consultations about whether boating should continue in a reserve as well as any possible restrictions for sensitive areas, environmental impact or public enjoyment (e.g. only on waterbodies accessible by road or trails excluded from a reserve, restrictions on horsepower).

All-terrain Vehicle (ATV) Use

ATV use is not permitted in wilderness or ecological reserves because of the damage these off-road vehicles cause to wetlands and ground vegetation. However, an existing trail could be excluded from a reserve to enable continued access. Recommendations regarding boundaries and trails to be excluded from a reserve can be made during public consultations. If an ATV trail were excluded from the boundary of a reserve, you would be able to continue to use the trail for ATV, but would not be able to drive off the trail into the reserve.

While All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) can be an excellent way to get outdoors, not everywhere can or should be accessible to ATVs. Help protect sensitive wetland habitats and water supply sources and prevent siltation of fish spawning areas by staying on designated trails and avoiding damage to wetlands and streams.







Scientific Research

Research may be conducted in a reserve under permit from the Land Management Division of the Department of Fisheries and Land Resources.

Educational Tours and Commercial Activities

Educational tours or commercial operations (such as film projects) may be conducted in a reserve under permit from the Land Management Division of the Department of Fisheries and Land Resources.

For more information on any of these activities, or other activities not outlined in this document, please contact the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council.

Contact Information

WERAC wants to hear from you! Visit www.engagenl.ca for more information on the Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland, to submit your comments, and sign up to be notified when there are updates or consultations on a proposed protected area.

You can also call, email, or mail WERAC. To get in touch with the Council:

Phone: 709.637.2081 (Secretariat)

Email: werac@gov.nl.ca

Mail: Executive Secretary, WERAC
c/o Natural Areas, Land Management Division
Department of Fisheries and Land Resources
P.O. Box 2006
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 6J8

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Instagram: @nl_werac

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Definitions

Biodiversity: the variety of living organisms from all sources (land, ocean and freshwater) in the world or in a particular habitat or ecosystem. This includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

Ecosystem: a dynamic web of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functioning unit.

Ecological integrity: an ecosystem has integrity when the living and non-living parts, the interactions between these parts and natural ecological processes are not impaired by stresses from human activity.

Habitat: the place or type of site where an organism or population naturally occurs.

Natural Region: a region that is distinguishable by its common natural features, like species, geography, geology and climate. There are nine Natural regions on the island of Newfoundland, which are further subdivided into 25 subregions.

Resiliency: the ability of an ecosystem to respond to disturbance by resisting damage and recovering quickly.

Transitional Reserve: an area of land intended for future protection under the WER Act, but where mineral exploration will be allowed to continue for a set period of time before being transitioned to protection as a wilderness or ecological reserve. Transitional reserves only count toward protected area totals once they are established as wilderness or ecological reserves.

Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act (WER Act): the governing provincial legislation for protecting natural areas for present and future generations.

Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council (WERAC): the volunteer advisory council made of up people from around the province that advises government on the establishment and management of our province's Wilderness and Ecological Reserves.




**Natural Regions Map 1:
Ecoregions and Subregions
of Newfoundland**

Labrador

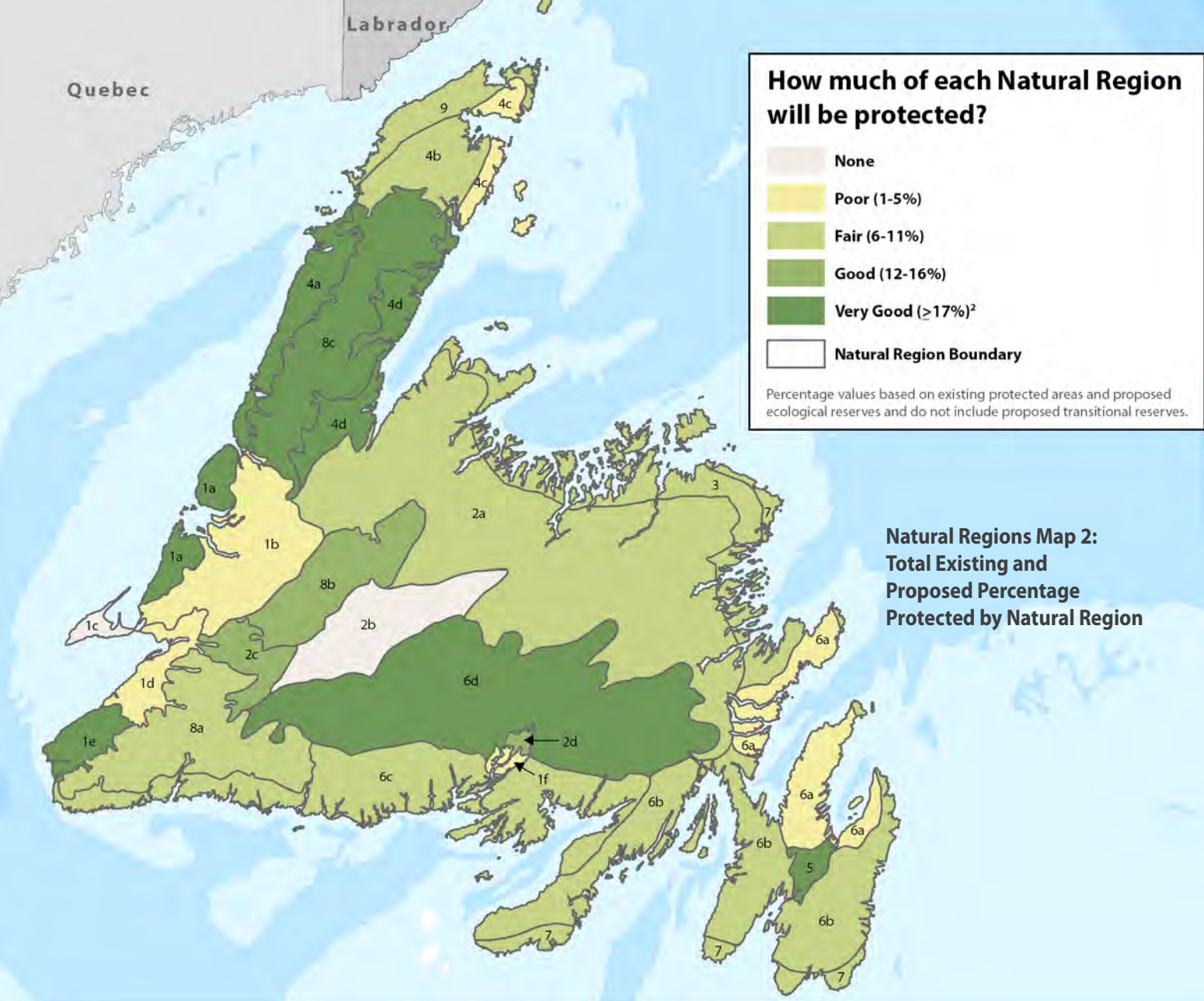
Quebec

Natural Regions

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Western Newfoundland Forest</p> <p>1a. Serpentine Range Subregion
1b. Corner Brook Subregion
1c. Port au Port Subregion
1d. St. George's Bay Subregion
1e. Codroy Subregion
1f. Bay d'Espoir Subregion</p> <p>2. Central Newfoundland Forest</p> <p>2a. Northcentral Subregion
2b. Red Indian Lake Subregion
2c. Portage Pond Subregion
2d. Twillick Steady Subregion</p> <p>3. North Shore Forest</p> <p>4. Northern Peninsula Forest</p> <p>4a. Coastal Plain Subregion
4b. Beaver Brook Limestone Subregion
4c. Northern Coastal Subregion
4d. Eastern Long Range Subregion</p> | <p>5. Avalon Forest</p> <p>6. Maritime Barrens</p> <p>6a. Northeastern Barrens Subregion
6b. Southeastern Barrens Subregion
6c. South Coast Barrens Subregion
6d. Central Barrens Subregion</p> <p>7. Eastern Hyper-Oceanic Barrens</p> <p>8. Long Range Barrens</p> <p>8a. Southern Long Range Subregion
8b. Buchans Plateau-Topsail Subregion
8c. Northern Long Range Subregion</p> <p>9. Strait Of Belle Isle Barrens</p> |
|--|---|

-  Proposed Ecological Reserve
-  Proposed Transitional Reserve
-  Existing Protected Area

The ecoregions of Newfoundland after Damman (1983) and Meades and Moores (1994).
South, G.R. (1983). *Biogeography and Ecology of the Island of Newfoundland*. The Hague, The Netherlands: Dr. W. Junk Publishers.
Meades, S.J. (1990). *Natural Regions of Newfoundland and Labrador*. A contract report submitted to the Protected Areas Association.



Natural Regions of the Island of Newfoundland¹

1. Western Newfoundland Forest

- 1a. Serpentine Range Subregion
- 1b. Corner Brook Subregion
- 1c. Port au Port Subregion
- 1d. St. George's Bay Subregion
- 1e. Codroy Subregion
- 1f. Bay d'Espoir Subregion

2. Central Newfoundland Forest

- 2a. Northcentral Subregion
- 2b. Red Indian Lake Subregion
- 2c. Portage Pond Subregion
- 2d. Twillick Steady Subregion

3. North Shore Forest

4. Northern Peninsula Forest

- 4a. Coastal Plain Subregion
- 4b. Beaver Brook Limestone Subregion
- 4c. Northern Coastal Subregion
- 4d. Eastern Long Range Subregion

5. Avalon Forest

6. Maritime Barrens

- 6a. Northeastern Barrens Subregion
- 6b. Southeastern Barrens Subregion
- 6c. South Coast Barrens Subregion
- 6d. Central Barrens Subregion

7. Eastern Hyper-Oceanic Barrens

8. Long Range Barrens

- 8a. Southern Long Range Subregion
- 8b. Buchans Plateau-Topsail Subregion
- 8c. Northern Long Range Subregion

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²Canada is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity which commits Canada to conserving at least 17% of its terrestrial areas and inland waters by 2020.

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Tony Power - page 68

Protected Areas Association - pages 50, 51

Paul Taylor - page 34

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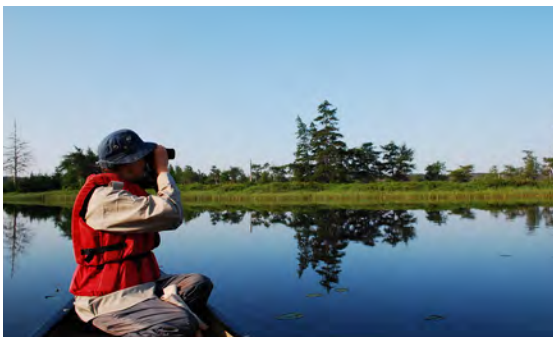
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A Home for Nature: Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland

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