**Decision Support Tool – Screening Criteria**

All criteria in Tables 1 and 2 of the Decision Support Tool are intended to help practitioners determine whether an area meets the Pan-Canadian standards and is therefore eligible to be reported as a Protected Area or an “Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure" (OECM) under the pan-Canadian standards. Criteria in Table 1 apply similarly to both Protected Areas and OECMs. Criteria in Table 2 help to both define and distinguish between Protected Areas and OECMs. All criteria in Table 2 must be met at the PA level for an area to be reported as protected, or at the OECM level or combination of OECM and PA levels for an area to be reported as an OECM. **This template is intended to be used in conjunction with the decision support tool and detailed interpretation guide.**

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| **BASIC INFORMATION** | |
| **Name of Site** | **Chignecto National Wildlife Area** |
| **Designation** | National Wildlife Area (NWA) |
| **Province/Territory** | Nova Scotia |
| **Year of Establishment / Securement** | 1982 |
| **Area (ha)** | 475 ha |
| **Management Authority** | Environment Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service |
| **Explanation of Management Authority** *(optional)* | Owned by the Crown, controlled, and administered by the Canadian Wildlife Service of Environment and Climate Change Canada under the *Canada Wildlife Act (R.S.C, 1985, c. W-9)*. |
| **Governance Type *(CPCAD type*)** | Government - federal |
| **Legal Basis / mechanism(s)** | *Canada Wildlife Act (R.S.C, 1985, c. W-9)* & *Wildlife Area Regulations (C.R.C., c. 1609).* |
| **Explanation of legal basis / mechanism(s)** *(optional)* | Under Section 9 (1) of the *Canada Wildlife Act (R.S.C, 1985, c. W-9)*, the Governor in Council may authorize the Minister to lease any lands, or purchase or acquire any lands or any interests or rights in any lands, for the purpose of research, conservation and interpretation in respect of migratory birds or with the agreement of the government of the province having an interest therein, other wildlife.  The site was formally declared an NWA on September 23, 1982 following a transfer of 84 hectares from the Nova Scotia government. |
| **Summary of Essential / Relevant natural, social and cultural values** | The Chignecto National Wildlife Area is managed by the Canadian Wildlife Service to maintain or restore naturally occurring ecosystems. Marsh birds such as sora and Virginia rail are common and some of the highest nesting densities of pied-billed grebe in North America have been recorded here. A total of 228 bird species have been recorded within the NWA in recent years, and more than 100 species breed within the protected area. The NWA further provides habitat for a wide variety of mammals including the masked shrew, northern flying squirrel, star-nosed mole, red fox, snowshoe hare and woodchuck among others. In addition, a sugar maple tree with a circumference of over 4 metres can be found on the NWA and has been estimated to be over 250 years old. |

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| **TABLE 1: STANDARDS COMMON TO PROTECTED AREAS AND OECMS** | | | | |
| **CRITERIA:** | **INTENDED EFFECT OF THE CRITERION** | **SCREENING CHOICE** | **EVIDENCE-BASED RATIONALE  Rationale/evaluation of how area meets or does not meet the intended effect of the criterion** | **MEETS INTENDED EFFECT?** |
| **GEOGRAPHICAL SPACE** | Demarcates the area to facilitate the in-situ conservation of biodiversity. | A. The geographical space has clearly defined and agreed-upon borders. | Chignecto National Wildlife Area borders are described in the *Wildlife Area Regulations (C.R.C., c. 1609).* The property boundary is delineated with NWA boundary signs. | Yes |
| **EFFECTIVE MEANS – 1** | Activities incompatible with the in-situ conservation of biodiversity do not occur and compatible activities are effectively managed. | A. The mechanism(s) provide(s) the ability to prevent incompatible activities and manage all other activities within the area, such that the in-situ conservation of biodiversity can be achieved | The *Wildlife Area Regulations (C.R.C., c. 1609)* are the primary mechanism providing the ability to prevent any activities that might disturb and destroy wildlife. The regulations also prevent individuals from hunting in the National Wildlife Area. General Prohibitions are listed under Section 3 (1) of theregulations. Site-specific prohibitions are listed in the management plan of the Chignecto National Wildlife Area and available online on the Government of Canada website.  The federal government does not hold the subsurface mineral rights for Chignecto NWA. However, under Section 3 (1) no person shall:  *(k) Carry on any commercial or industrial activity,*  *(l) disturb or remove any soil, sand, gravel or other material*,  The Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources holds the subsurface rights of the NWA. The geology of the area is mostly composed of sedimentary rocks such as gypsum, limestone and anhydrite. The area was the site of a short-lived mining operation in the early 20th century by the Maritime Gypsum Company. It is unlikely that a mining company  would want to operate in Chignecto NWA given the high cost of regulatory compliance and lack of social licence. In any case, the prohibitions stated in the *Wildlife Area Regulations* are sufficient to prevent resource extraction within the NWA. | Yes |
| **EFFECTIVE MEANS – 2** |  | A. The mechanism(s) compel(s) the authority(ies) to prohibit activities that are incompatible with the in-situ conservation of biodiversity. | The *Canada Wildlife Act (R.S.C, 1985, c. W-9)* compels the Minister of the Environment to conserve biodiversity on its land.  In order to carry out the prohibitions laid out in the Act, the *Wildlife Area Regulations* *(C.R.C., c. 1609)* prohibit activities incompatible with conservation biodiversity as a whole. | Yes |
| **LONG TERM** | The area is permanently protected or conserved and not easily reversed. | A. The mechanism(s) is/are intended to be in effect for the long term and not easily reversed. | The area is permanently protected under the *Canada Wildlife Act (R.S.C, 1985, c. W-9).*  Section 9 (3) of the Act states that purchased land can only be leased or sold if compatible with wildlife research, conservation and interpretation. | Yes |
| **TIMING** | Biodiversity is protected or conserved year-round. | A. The mechanism(s) is/are in effect year-round | The regulations are in place year round. | Yes |

| **TABLE 2: STANDARDS THAT FURTHER DEFINE AND DISTINGUISH BETWEEN PROTECTED AREAS AND OECMS** | | | | |
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| **CRITERIA:** | **INTENDED EFFECT OF THE CRITERION** | **SCREENING CHOICE** | **EVIDENCE-BASED RATIONALE:**  **Rationale/evaluation of how area meets or does not meet the intended effect of the criterion** | **OUTCOME** |
| **SCOPE OF OBJECTIVES** | Objectives have sufficient scope to result in the in-situ conservation of biodiversity. | A. The objectives are for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity as a whole, or for indigenous values accomplished through the in-situ conservation of biodiversity. | The five objectives of Chignecto NWA are as follows:   1. Existing populations of migratory birds, and resident flora and fauna, including species at risk, in restored and managed wetland habitat will be maintained. 2. Restore and manage old-field habitats in the early stages of old-field succession to benefit edge and open grassland migratory birds. 3. Forested habitats will be managed to maintain native upland vegetation so that populations of migratory birds, and resident flora and fauna, including species at risk, are sustained, and habitats and residences are created or maintained. 4. Protect native plant species in all habitat types within the NWA. 5. Promote the opportunities for responsible public access to enhance Canadians’ connection to nature, while controlling unauthorized and prohibited activities in the NWA. Protect the NWA’s overall ecological qualities and special habitat features from prohibited activities (such as camping and campfires). | Yes - PA |
| **PRIMACY OF OBJECTIVES** | Objectives are such that they result in the in-situ conservation of biodiversity. | A. Conservation objectives are stated as primary and overriding of other objectives. | The objectives of the *Canadian Wildlife Act (R.S.C, 1985, c. W-9)* are for the conservation of biodiversity as a whole and overriding of other objectives. Chignecto National Wildlife Area objectives are for conservation of biodiversity therefore no conflict exists. | Yes - PA |
| **GOVERNING AUTHORITIES** | The in-situ conservation of biodiversity is not jeopardized by relevant governing authorities. | A. All relevant governing authorities acknowledge and abide by the conservation objectives of the area. | Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service, Atlantic is responsible for site management of Chignecto NWA. Ducks Unlimited Canada maintains the controlled water-level impoundments. The Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources holds the subsurface rights of the NWA.  Governing authorities acknowledge and abide by the conservation objectives of the area. | Yes - PA |
| **BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION OUTCOMES** | Biodiversity is conserved in situ. | A. The area is achieving the conservation objectives. | The 475 ha NWA consists of 213 ha of controlled water-level freshwater impoundments, 110 ha of natural sinkhole ponds, 100 ha of forest habitat, and 52 ha of old fields in various stages of reforestation. Chignecto NWA has a significant area of controlled water-level freshwater wetlands. These are maintained by Ducks Unlimited Canada and managed collaboratively by Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Service. Impoundment infrastructures ensure biodiversity persist *in-situ* in this otherwise altered landscape.  Cattails and bur-reed are the most plentiful emergent aquatic plants occurring around the margins of the ponds and lakes, while water milfoil, pondweeds and other submergent plants grow primarily in the deeper waters. The wooded uplands of Amherst Point are dominated by conifers, particularly spruce, balsam fir and eastern larch. Eastern hemlock grows on the slopes and ridges surrounding some of the sinkholes, while a few sugar maple and yellow birch are all that remain of a formerly more prominent hardwood stand.  The NWA supports an impressive diversity of bird species, with over 228 species recorded and over 100 species breeding within the NWA. Several species of waterfowl, including Canada goose, mallard, black duck, northern pintail, green-winged teal, blue-winged teal, American wigeon, northern shoveller and ring-necked duck regularly breed here. Commonly occurring and frequently observed mammal species include white-tailed deer, red fox, raccoon, porcupine, striped skunk, beaver and muskrat.  Under the Connecting Canadians to Nature (CCtN) initiative (2015-2020), investments will be made to repair and improve the existing trail network, and to update and improve interpretive materials along the trails over the next few years. | Yes - PA |

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| **SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT** | |
| **OUTCOME / EVALUATION** | **Screening Outcome:** Protected Area (meets all criteria)  Is this an Interim Target 1 area: no  Is this a candidate Target 1 area: no  **Currently reported to CPCAD/CARTS?** Yes, as Protected Area  **Total Area (ha) to be reported to CPCAD/CARTS:** 475 ha |
| Identify deficiencies that could be overcome in order to report as PA or OECM |  |
| Lead evaluator / assessor | Simon Paquin, Environment Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service |
| Communications / Engagement | *Names of governing authorities and others consulted, including names and positions of contact people and dates* |
| Approvals | *Names of governing authorities (including landowners, right holders and the responsible jurisdiction) that have approved the content and results of this screening as being accurate and complete to the best of their knowledge and agree to reporting of data.* |

Tags: Nova Scotia, NS, Federal, Protected area, PA, IUCN VI, Resources management area, Government of Canada, ECCC, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Crown land, Canadian Wildlife Service, CWS, Marsh, Bog, Wetland, Lake, Terrestrial Freshwater, Forest, Mixed Wood, Fen, National Wildlife Area, NWA, 2020.