

STAFF REPORT



To: Jay Barbeau, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Samantha Willock, Municipal Planner

Subject: Official Plan Review – Agricultural Designation Revisions

Date: October 7, 2025

Executive Summary:

This report and the attached schedules provide an overview and brief explanation of the recommendations arising from the September 25th Agricultural Advisory Committee regarding the new Official Plan Agricultural Designation. The Committee has recommended 10 changes which would result in approximately 540 hectares (1,340 acres) being added to the draft Agricultural Designation.

At this time, Council is being presented with the following options:

1. Implement the Agricultural Advisory Committee's recommendations and proceed to the statutory special Council meeting;
2. Keep the existing Version 6 draft Official Plan Agricultural Designation and proceed to the statutory special Council meeting; or
3. Provide staff with direction on additional revisions or discussions on the proposed Agricultural Designation and defer the statutory special Council meeting.

Recent Project Progression:

At the September 2nd Council meeting, staff provided Council with an update on the Official Plan project, including a copy of the latest draft Official Plan (version 6) and the Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) data which had been received from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Agribusiness (OMAFRA). The staff report provided two options:

1. Keep the Agricultural Designation as proposed by version 6 and proceed with the statutory special Council meeting, or
2. Refer the Agricultural Designation back to the Agricultural Advisory Committee to revise the designation in accordance with the LEAR data. Council opted to refer the matter back to the Agricultural Advisory Committee.

The Agricultural Advisory Committee met on September 25th with staff and the project consultants to review the Agricultural Designation and the LEAR data. Multiple recommended revisions, which are outlined through this report, came out of this meeting. The Committee took this opportunity to recommend changes based on the LEAR, as well as refine some boundaries unrelated to the LEAR data.

Proposed Revisions:

The proposed revisions have been broken down into multiple areas of the Municipality. Appendix 1 offers a key map to illustrate the revision zones.

Area 1:

Area 1 is in the northwestern corner of Kirkpatrick Township, located north of Highway 17 between the Markstay-Warren boundary and Deer Lake Road. This area was not within the proposed version 6 Agricultural Designation of the Official Plan, however it was identified as prime agricultural lands and potential agricultural lands by the OMAFA LEAR.

The Agricultural Advisory Committee has recommended that the lands shown in green in the image below be added to the Agricultural Designation. This is an area of approximately 547 hectares (1350 acres) which is connected to the agricultural system via the highway corridor. This land also functions as part of the broader agricultural system which extends into Markstay-Warren.

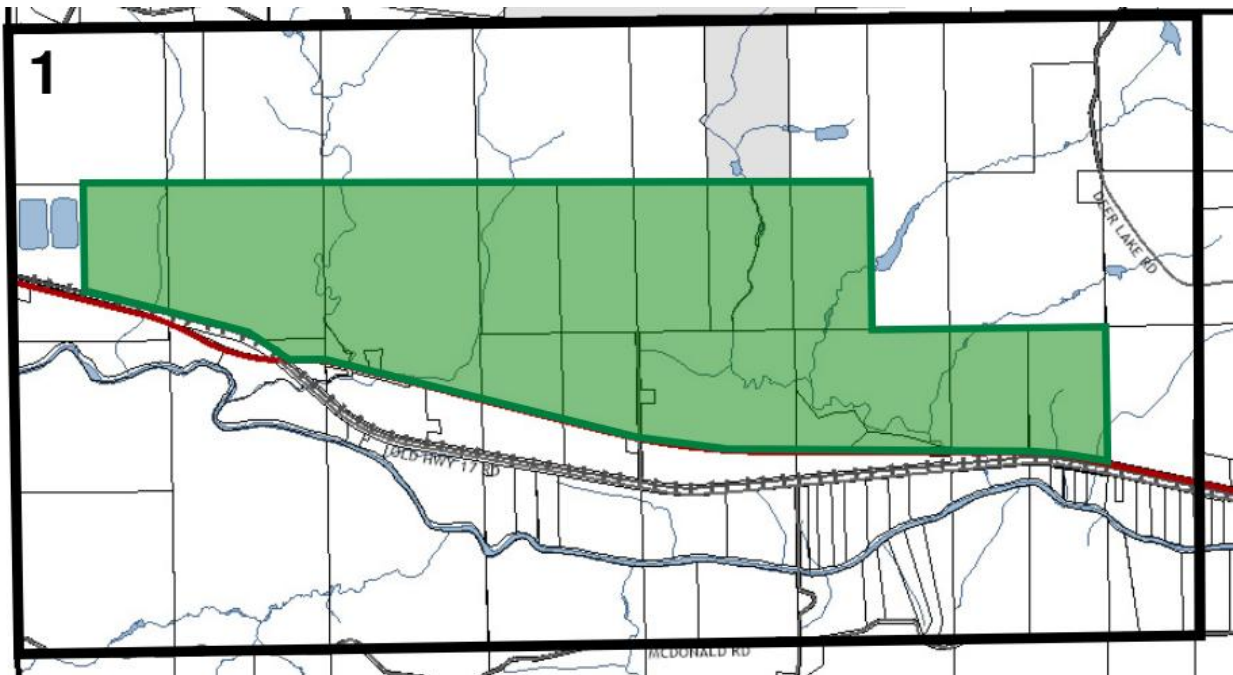


Fig. 1 –Area 1 Recommended Revisions with Lands to be added Shown in Green

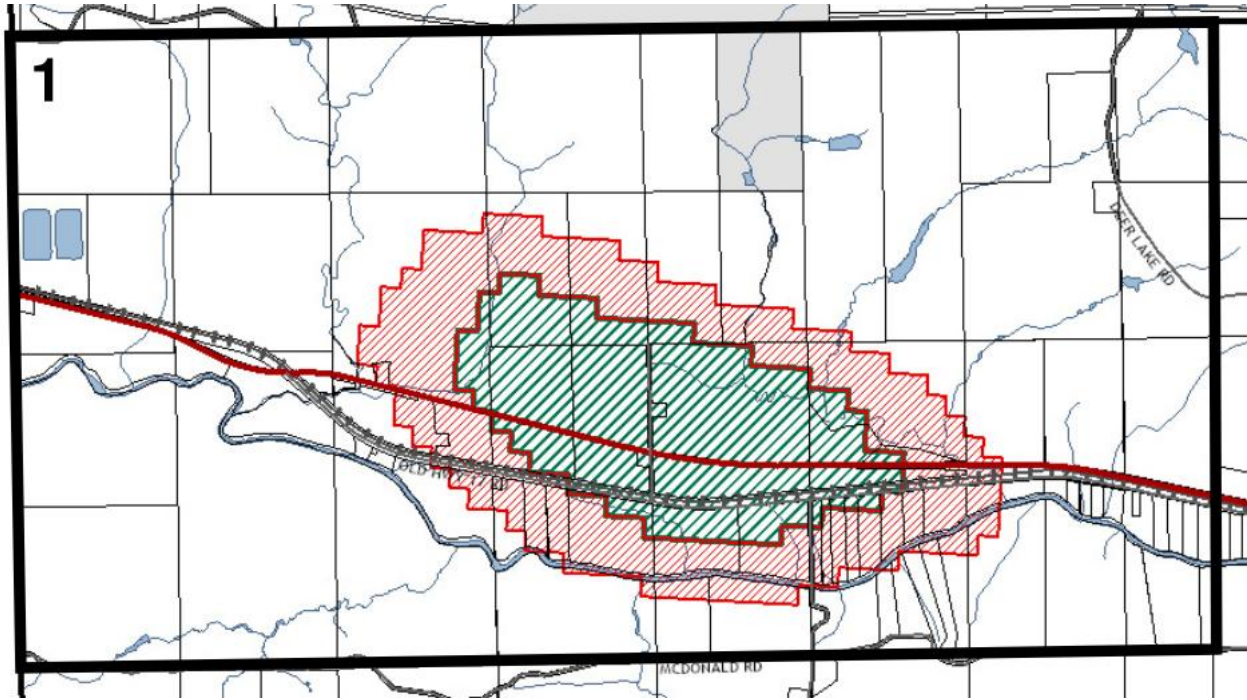


Fig. 2 – Area 1 Agricultural Designation (V6) and LEAR Data



Fig. 3 – Area 1 Aerial Mapping with White Indicating the Lands to be Added

Area 2:

Area 2 is in Macpherson and Kirkpatrick Townships, located west of Highway 64 between Lavigne and Betty Road. While a small portion of this area was identified in the LEAR as potential prime agricultural lands, a large swath of this land is proposed to be within the Agricultural Designation. The Agricultural Advisory Committee reviewed this area and decided that while the LEAR does not indicate significant agricultural value, the lands should remain in the Agricultural Designation. Significant investments have been made into infrastructure improvements (tile drainage) in this area, making the lands more viable than the LEAR reflects. No changes are proposed in this area.

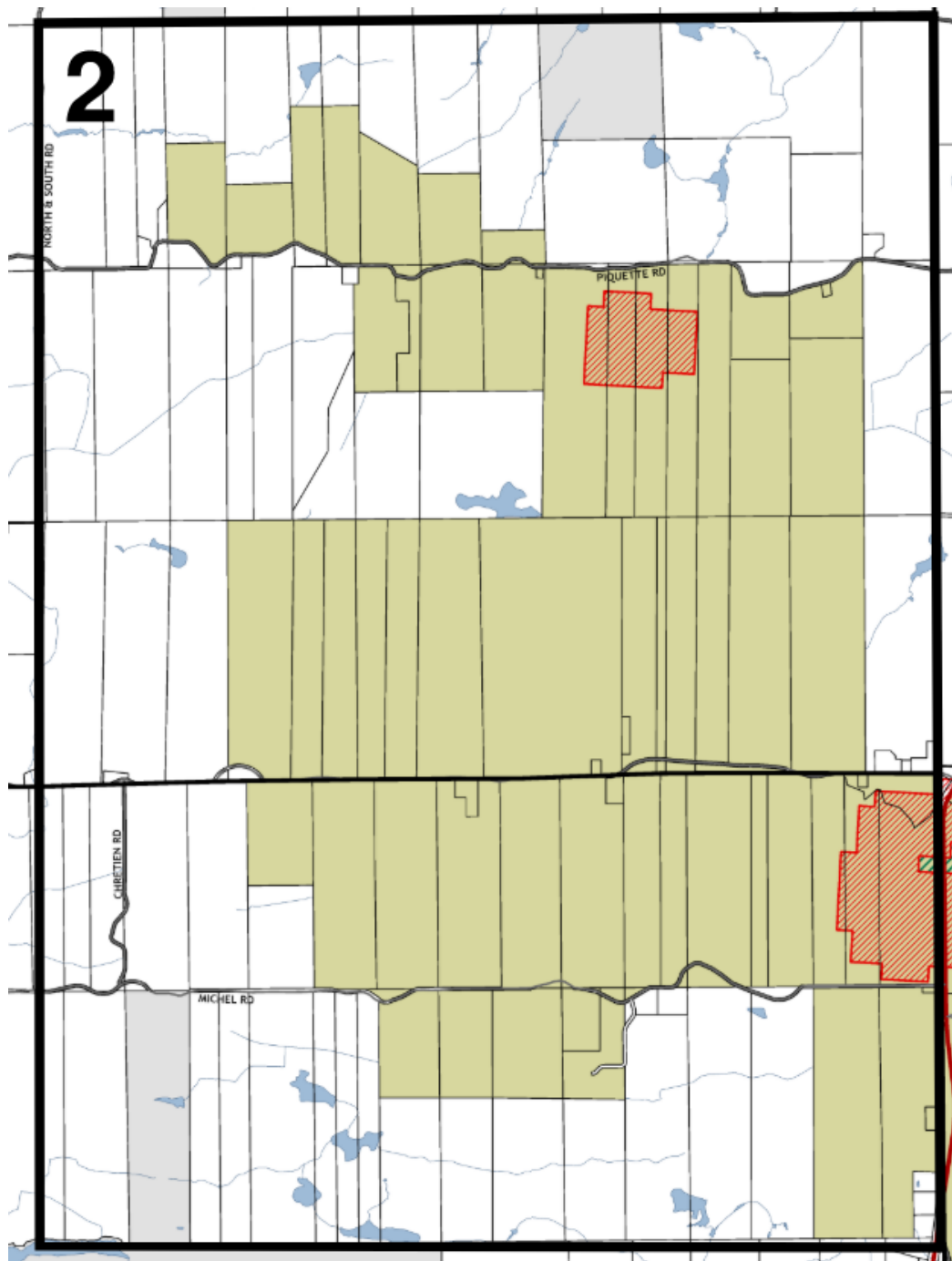


Fig. 4 –Area 2 Agricultural Designation (V6) and LEAR Data

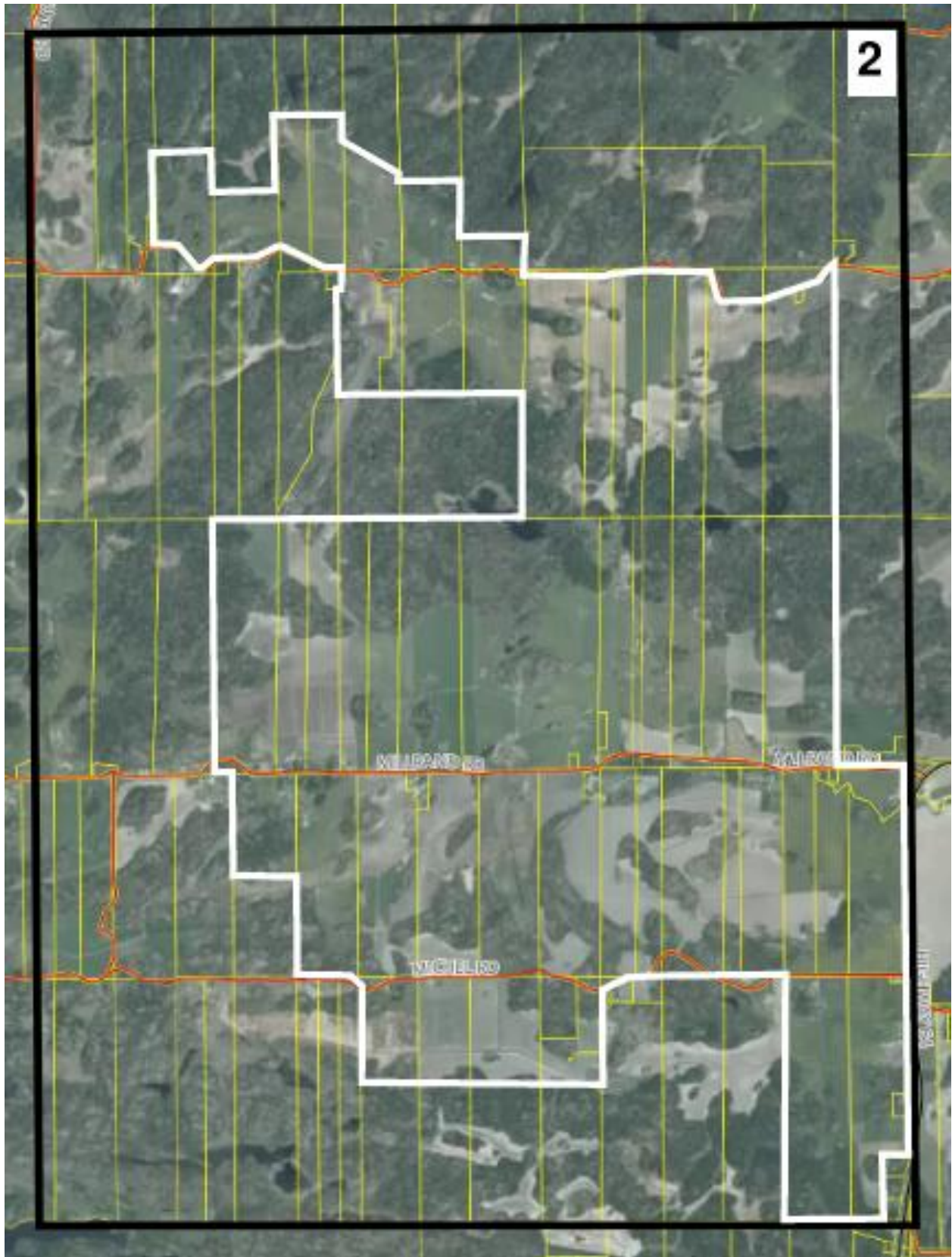


Fig. 5 –Area 2 Aerial Mapping with White Indicating the Proposed Agricultural Designation (V6)

Area 3:

Area 3 is south of Lavigne, spanning from the north side of Highway 64 down to the south side of Courchesne Road. This pocket is bounded by Trottier Road to the East and Duck Creek Road to the West.

The LEAR did not indicate any prime or potential agricultural lands in this area, but it was added to the Agricultural Designation following the Agricultural Advisory Committee's April 2025 review. The Committee believes this area is important to the broader agricultural system as it has approximately 500 workable acres (~200 hectares) and a grain bin was recently constructed in this area which supports the local farming community. No changes are proposed in this area.



Fig. 6 –Area 3 Agricultural Designation (V6) and LEAR Data

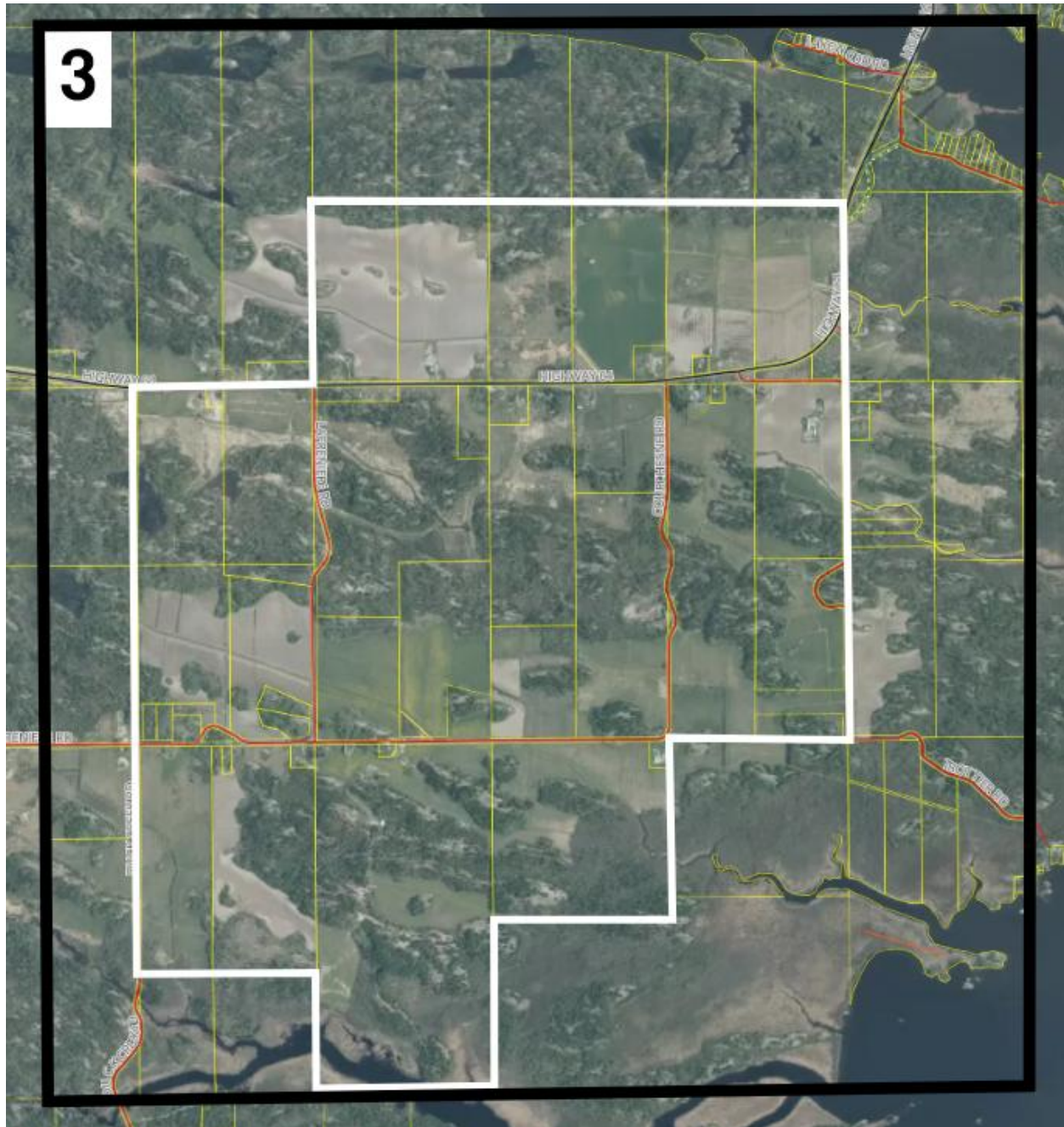


Fig. 7 –Area 3 Aerial Mapping with White Indicating the Proposed Agricultural Designation (V6)

Area 4:

Area 4 is a small portion of land in Loudon Township along Duck Creek Road. Approximately 115 hectares was identified in OMAFA's LEAR as potential agricultural lands. The Agricultural Advisory Committee is of the opinion that this is an insufficient size for an agricultural block, the land is not connected to the broader system, and it is not very suitable for farming. As such, they recommend this area not be added to the Agricultural Designation. This land was not included in the initial draft Agricultural Designation, so no changes are proposed in this area.

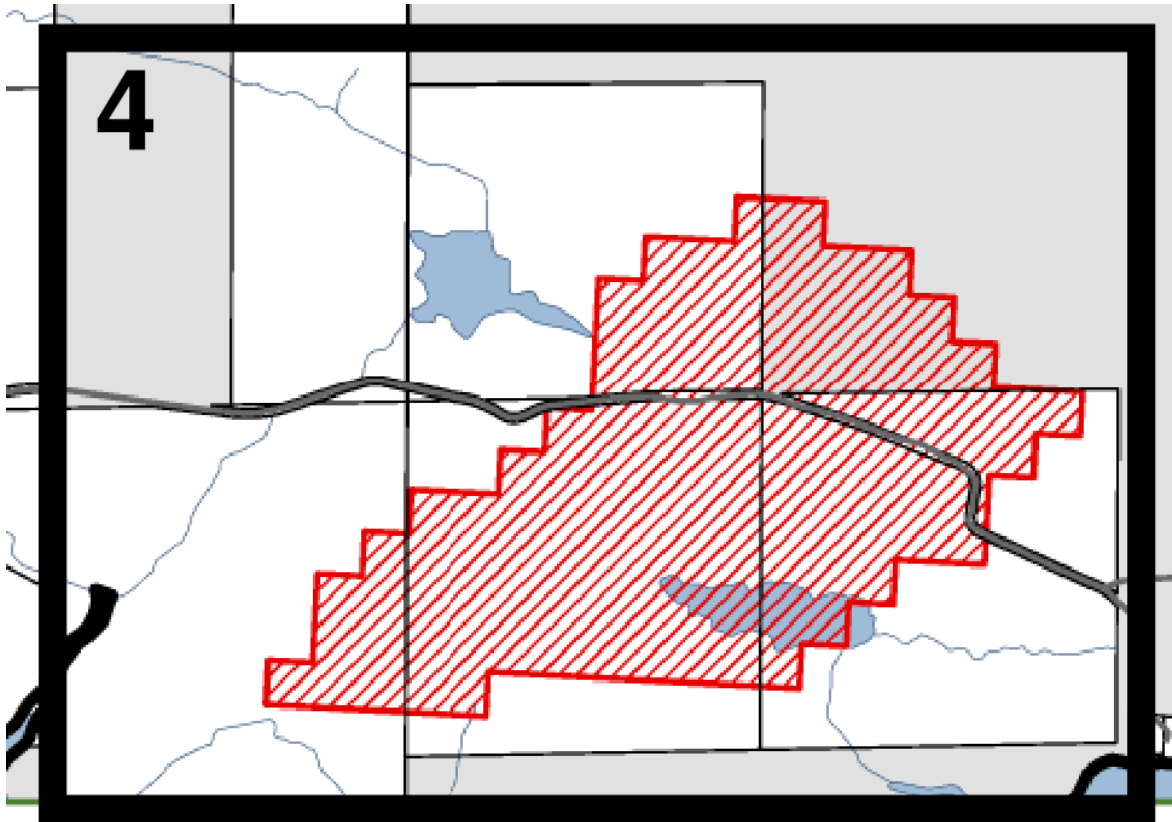


Fig. 8 –Area 4 Agricultural Designation (V6) and LEAR Data



Fig. 9 –Area 4 Aerial Mapping

Area 5:

Area 5 is located on the North side of Highway 17 between Verner and Beaudry Road. The lands in this area were included in the draft Agricultural Designation and the southern portion of these lots were identified as prime and potential agricultural lands by the LEAR. The Agricultural Advisory Committee has recommended removing the Agricultural Designation from the rear portion of these properties as the northern part of these lands are not in production. This will remove approximately 255 hectares (630 acres) of land from the Agricultural Designation.

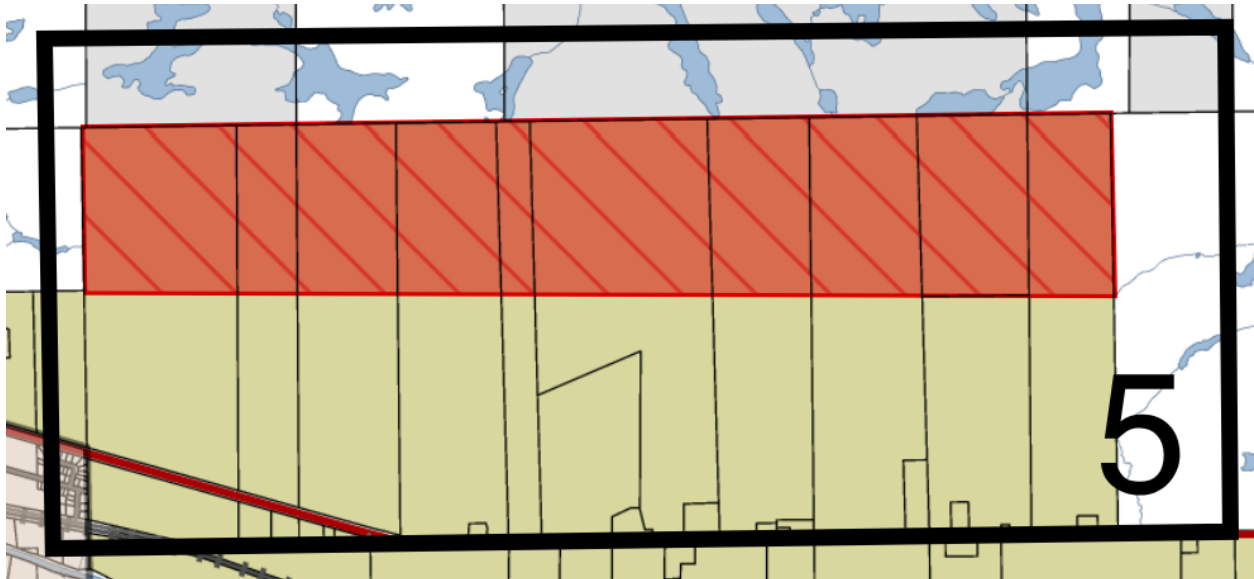


Figure 10 – Area 5 Recommended Revisions with Lands to be Removed Shown in Red

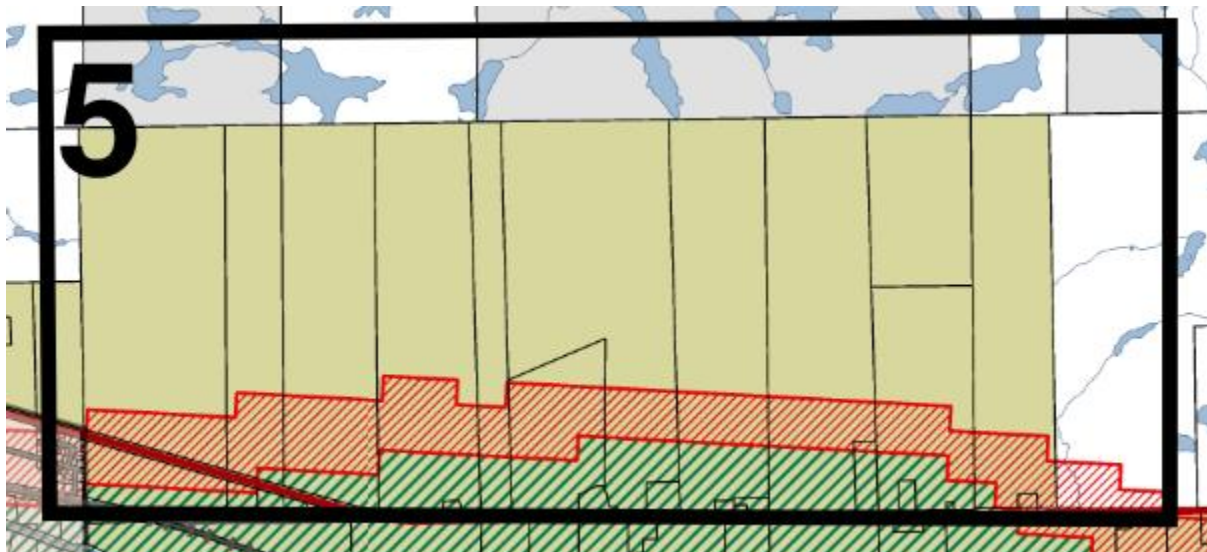


Figure 11 – Area 5 Agricultural Designation (V6) and LEAR Data



Figure 12 – Area 5 Aerial Mapping with Red Indicating the Lands to be removed from the Proposed Agricultural Designation (V6)

Area 6:

Area 6 is on both sides of Laplage Road between Rainville Road and Alouette Road. The draft Agricultural Designation includes more lands on the west side of Laplage Road than the LEAR data, and does not include any lands on the east side of Laplage Road whereas the LEAR has highlighted a significant portion of some properties. Based on the LEAR data, the Agricultural Advisory Committee has proposed two revisions in this area. They recommend reducing the Agricultural Designation on the west side of Laplage Road by aligning the southern boundary of the designation with the municipal drain, and adding in part of two properties on the east side of Laplage Road. These recommendations would add 14 hectares of land from the Agricultural Designation (Removing 90 hectares and adding 104 hectares).

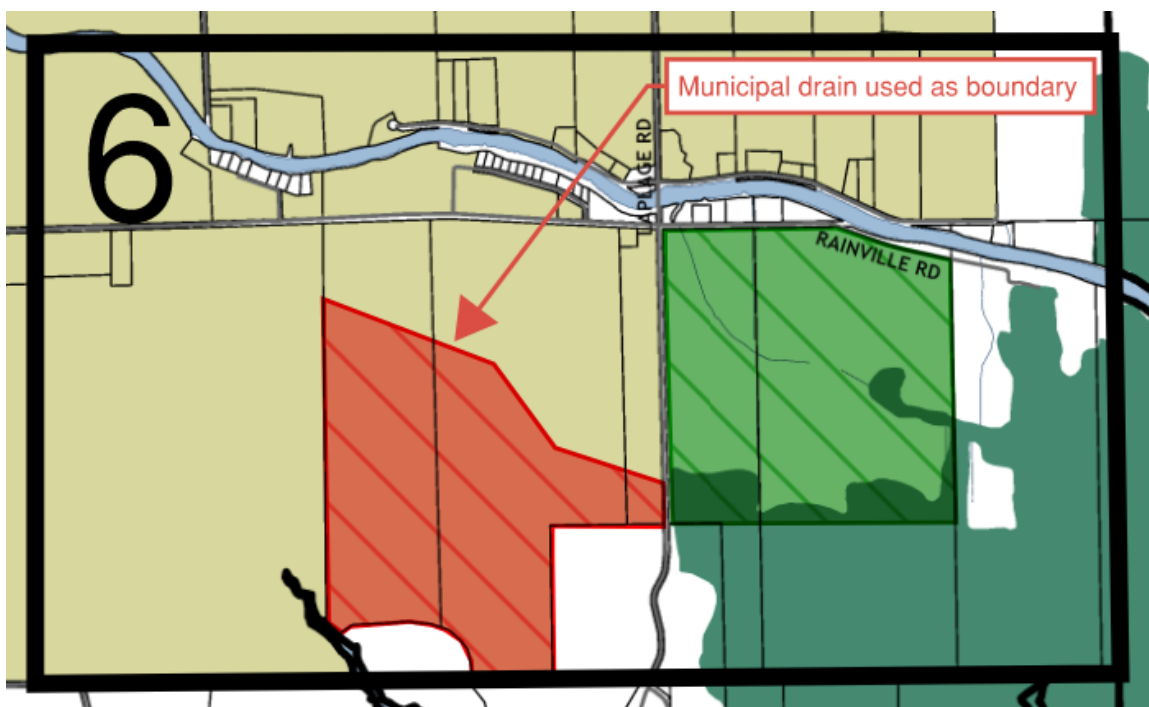


Figure 13 – Area 6 Recommended Revisions with Additions shown in Green and Areas to Remove Shown in Red

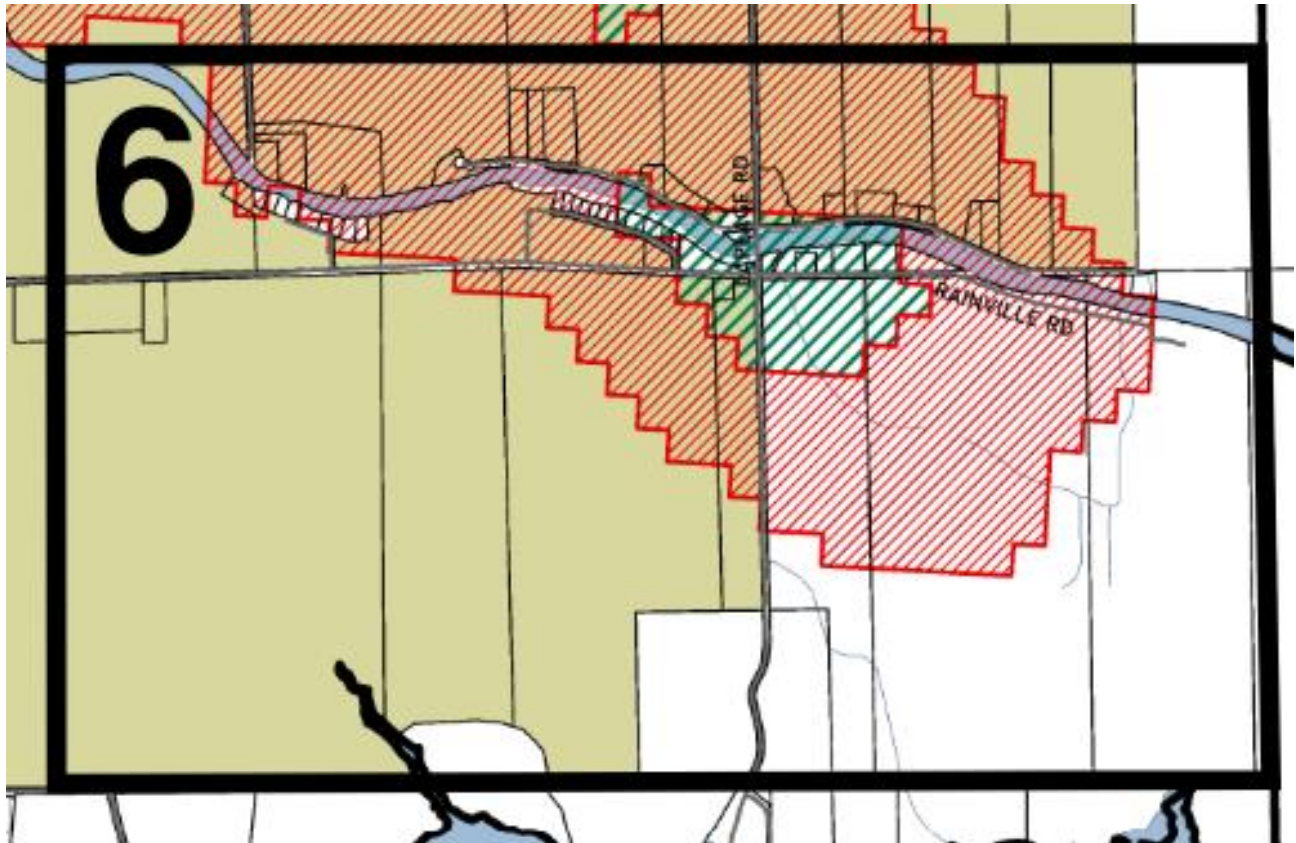


Figure 14 – Area 6 Agricultural Designation (V6) and LEAR Data

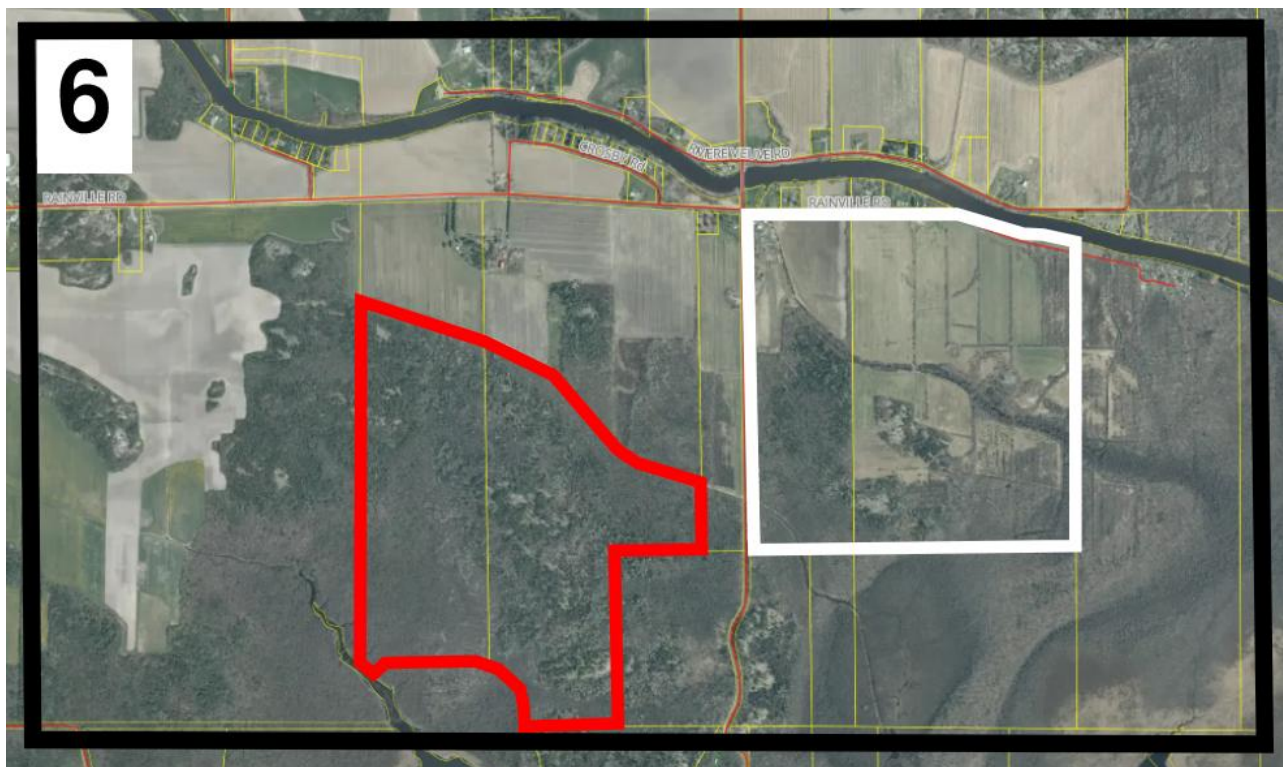


Figure 15 – Area 6 Aerial Mapping with White Indicating Lands to be Added to the Proposed Designation and Red Showing Lands to be Removed from the Proposed Designation

Area 7:

Area 7 is north of Cache Bay, between Leblanc Road and Lac Clair (Arcand) Road. Four revisions are recommended in this area, resulting from a secondary in-depth review of the draft Agricultural Designation. The first recommendation is to remove two parcels of land totalling 40 hectares which front onto Lac Clair Road. The agricultural use occupies less than half of the properties and the land is on the border of the designation so removing this land won't create a pocket in the broader system. The second recommendation is to expand the Agricultural Designation approximately 115 metres further north to better align with the edge of the fields. This would add approximately 40 hectares to the designation. The third recommendation is to remove four parcels of land (approximately 12 hectares) which front onto Arcand Road between Highway 17 and Stewart Road due to their size and a previous Ontario Land Tribunal (previously OMB) decision. The final recommendation is to remove approximately 64 hectares of land between Vachon Road and Leblanc Road as there is very limited Agricultural lands within this portion. The result of all these changes would reduce the amount of land within the Agricultural designation by 76 hectares.

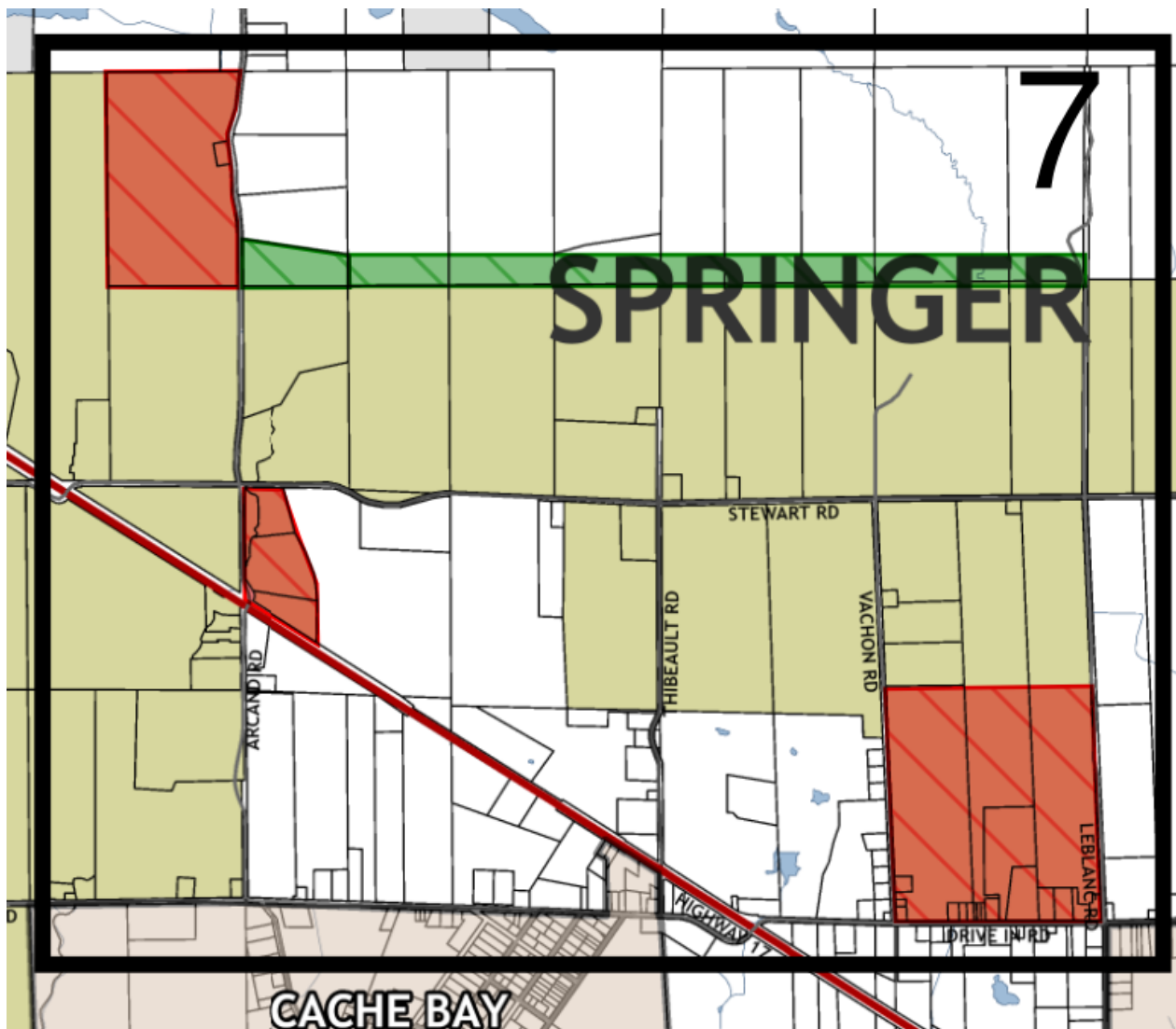


Figure 16 – Area 7 Recommended Revisions with Additions shown in Green and Areas to Remove Shown in Red

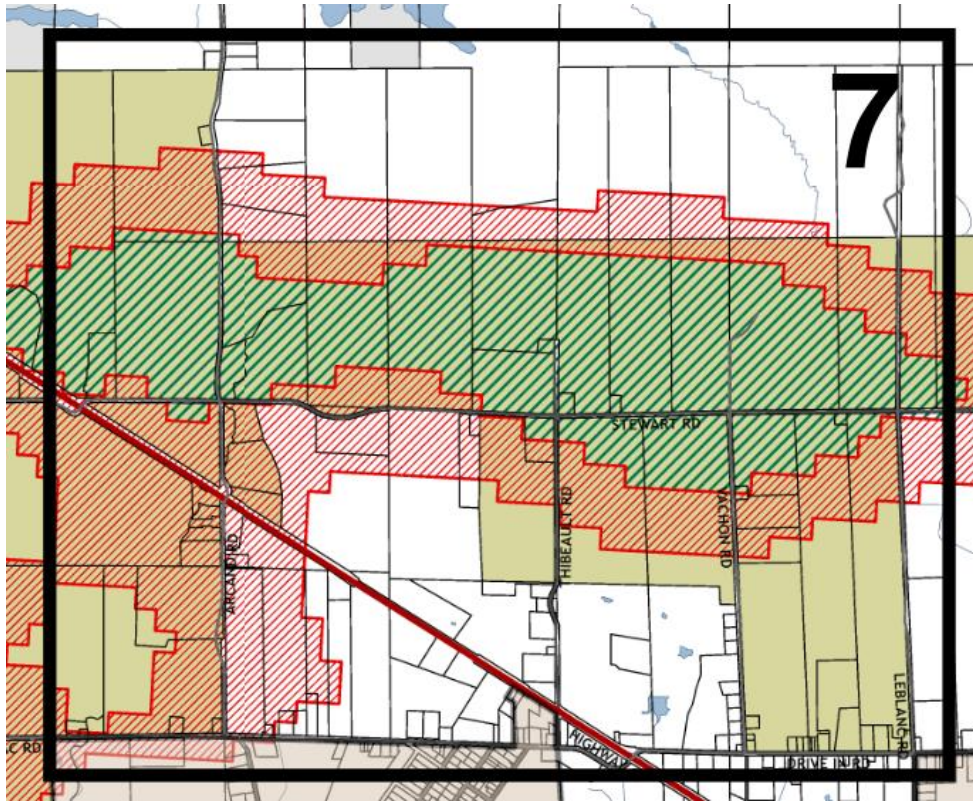


Figure 17 – Area 7 Agricultural Designation (65) and LEAR Data

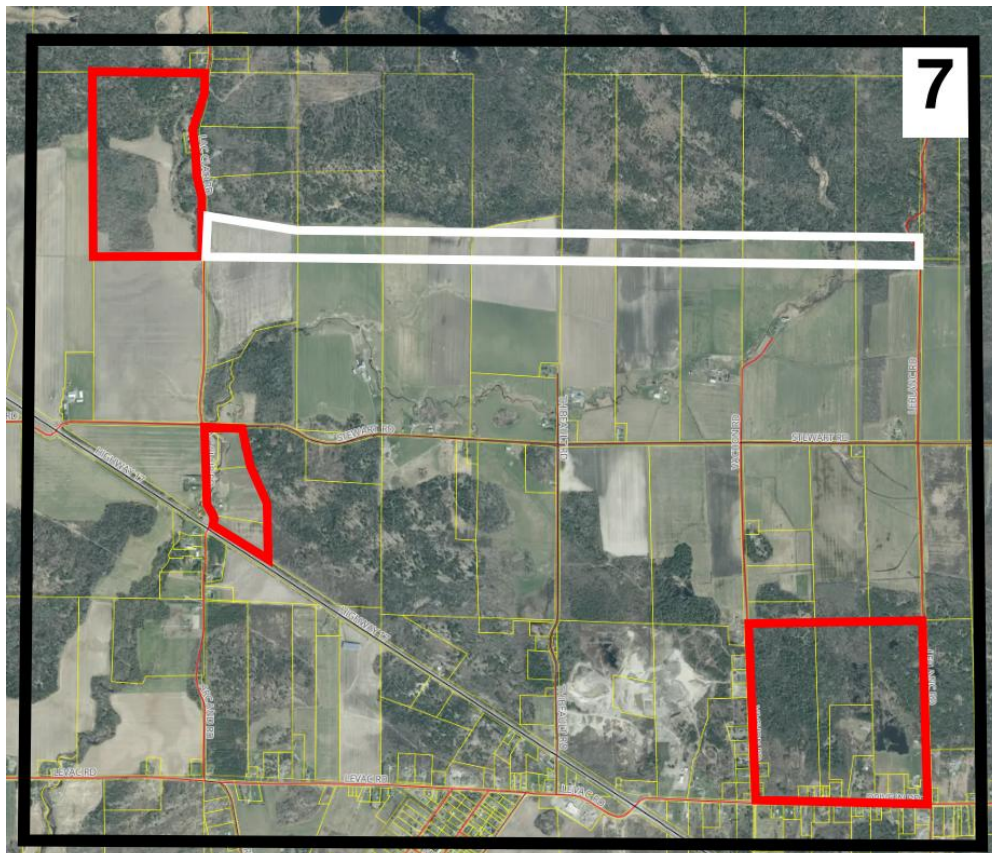


Figure 18 – Area 7 Aerial Mapping with White Indicating Lands to be Added to the Proposed Designation and Red Showing Lands to be Removed from the Proposed Designation

Area 8:

Area 8 is located north of Drive In Road, between Leblanc Road and De L'Etang Road. The Agricultural Advisory Committee has recommended that the lands which are naturally severed by Highway 64 (approximately 8 hectares) be removed from the Agricultural Designation as they are not in production and do not contribute to the agricultural system.

The LEAR identified approximately 18 hectares of land at the corner of De L'Etang Road and Levert Drive as potential agricultural lands. The Agricultural Advisory Committee is recommending that these lands not be added to the Agricultural Designation as it is an insignificant amount of land that is very wet, is not connected to the agricultural system, and a portion of this land is already occupied by a solar farm.

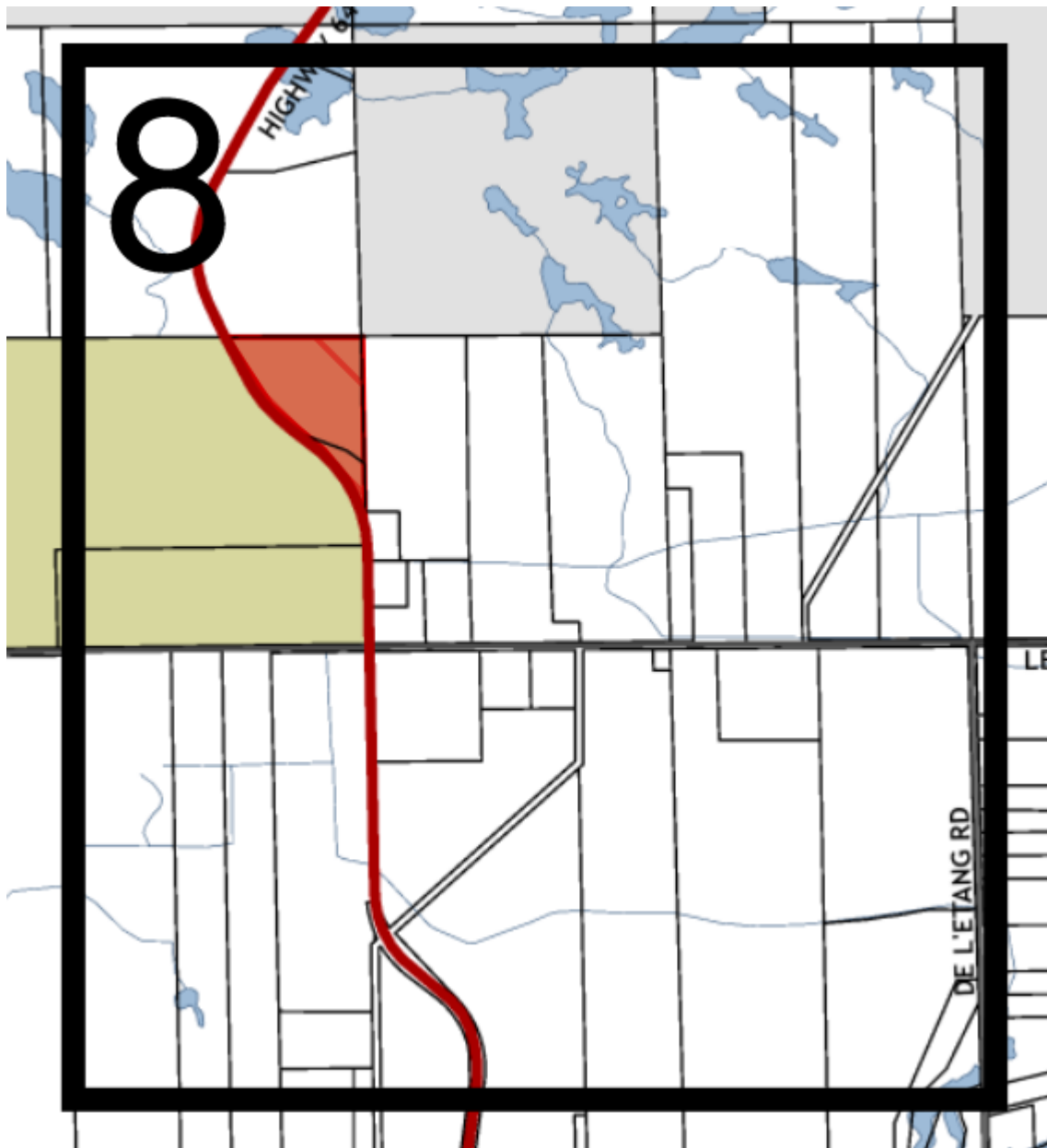


Figure 19 – Area 8 Recommended Revisions with Lands to Remove Shown in Red

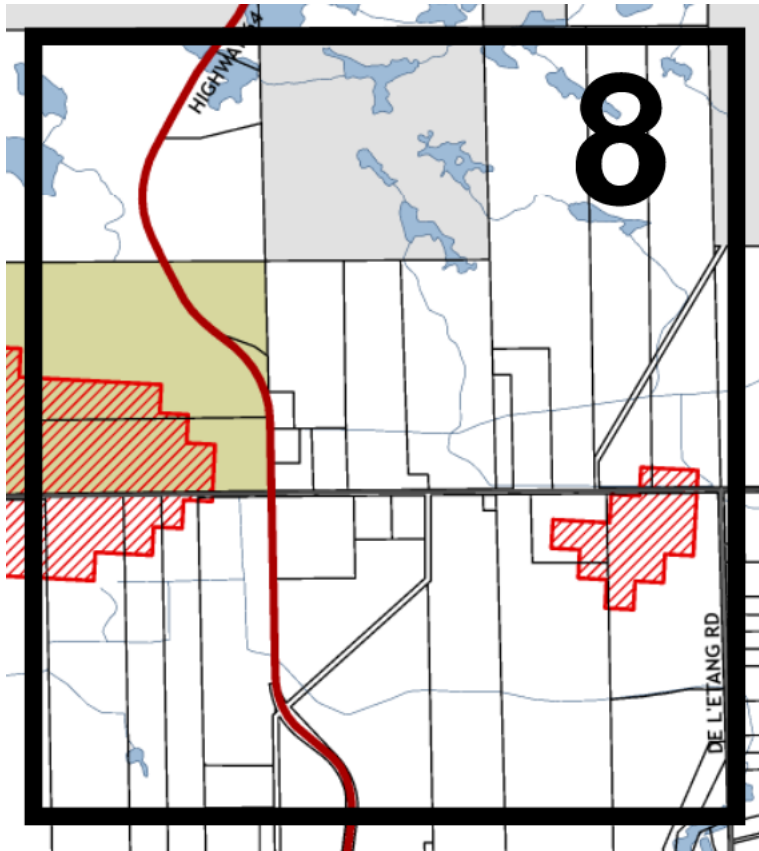


Figure 20 – Area 8 Agricultural Designation (V6) and LEAR Data

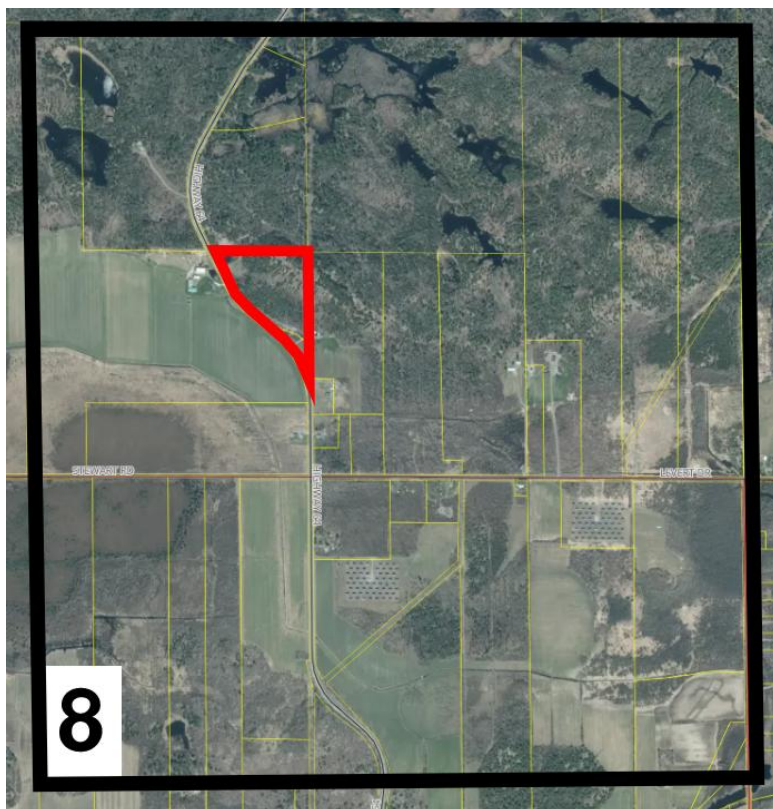


Figure 21 – Area 8 Aerial Mapping with Lands to be Removed from the Proposed Designation Shown in Red

Area 9:

Area 9 is south of Sturgeon Falls between the Sturgeon River and Nipissing Street. This area was not part of the draft Agricultural Designation (V6) because of concerns regarding the connection to the larger system, but the area was identified in the LEAR as potential agricultural lands. Given this new information, the Agricultural Advisory Committee has recommended that this land be added into the designation. This area has had significant infrastructure improvements and contains a large agribusiness, being Leisure Farms. The area proposed to be added is approximately 290 hectares, which is a sufficient enough size to be its own block. The proposed boundaries of the designation are in line with the rear property boundaries of the previously severed residential lots which front onto Quesnel Road to allow for potential future residential development.

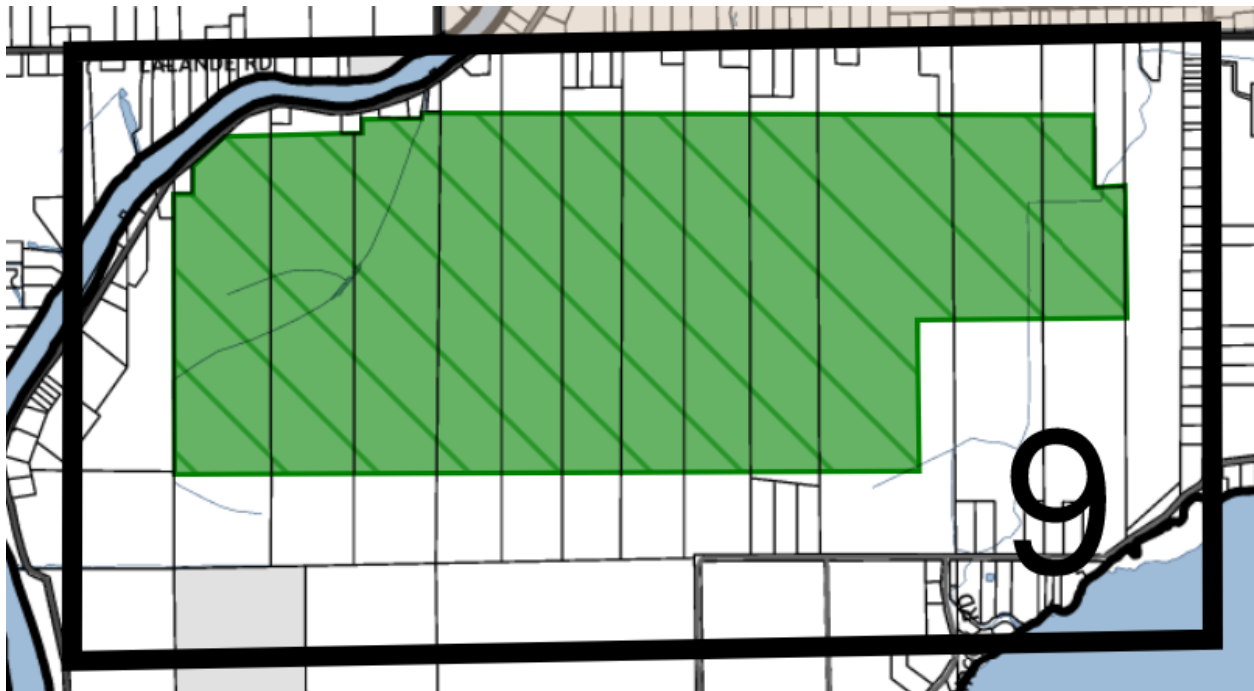


Figure 22 – Area 9 Recommended Revisions with Lands to be Added Shown in Green

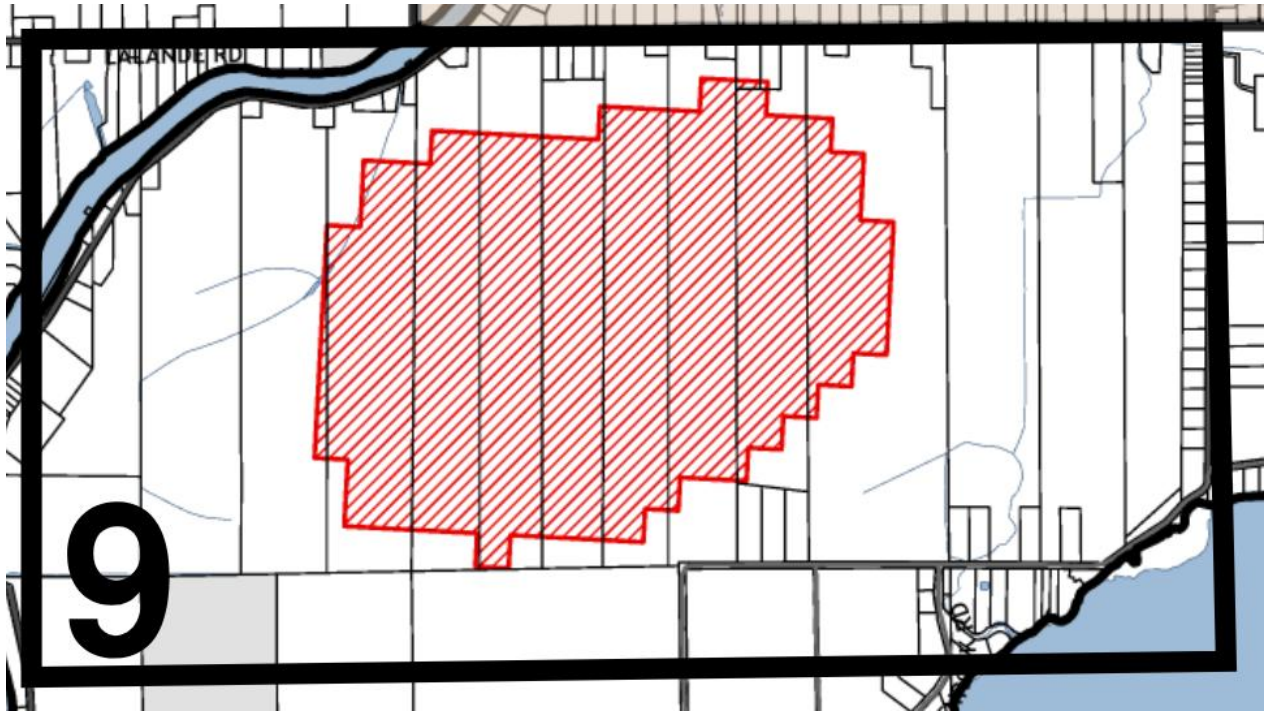


Figure 23 – Area 9 Agricultural Designation (65) and LEAR Data



Figure 24 – Area 9 Aerial Mapping with Lands to be Added Shown in White

Summary of Proposed Revisions:

Area	Land Added (ha)	Land Removed
1	547	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	0	0
5	0	255
6	104	90
7	40	116
8	0	8
9	290	0
Total	981	439
Total Change in Land Area	Increase of 542 hectares (1,340 acres)	

Next Steps:

Staff are now seeking direction from Council on if the Agricultural Designation should be revised in accordance with the Agricultural Advisory Committee's recommendations, and/or if further revisions are required. Should Council decide that no further revisions are required, the next step would be to proceed with a special meeting of Council.

As per Section 26 of the Planning Act, a special meeting of Council, which is open to the public, must be held to discuss the revisions that may be required prior to the Official Plan being sent to MMAH.

As the Agricultural Designation has generated significant public interest throughout this project and the changes described within this report will be new to the public, it is recommended that this meeting being preceded by an hour-long public workshop/open house. The open house would be focused on the agricultural designation and provide an opportunity for the public to view display boards and ask questions to the consultants. This would give the public an opportunity to better understand the policy implications before the Council meeting starts.

The Planning Act sets out requirements for public notices of the special Council meeting. Given these notice periods, the date of the special meeting will need to be set approximately 7 weeks ahead of time. Should staff be given direction at this time, the special Council meeting would likely be scheduled for the last week of November or first week of December.

Conclusion:

In accordance with Council direction, the Agricultural Advisory Committee reviewed the draft Official Plan Agricultural Designation and OMAFA's LEAR data. The Committee has provided 10 proposed revisions which were outlined in this report. Staff are now requesting direction from Council on:

1. Implement the Agricultural Advisory Committee's recommendations and proceed to the statutory special Council meeting;
2. Keep the existing Version 6 draft Official Plan Agricultural Designation and proceed to the statutory special Council meeting; or

3. Provide staff with direction on additional revisions or discussions on the proposed Agricultural Designation and defer the statutory special Council meeting.

Prepared By:

Samantha Willock, Municipal Planner

Attachments:

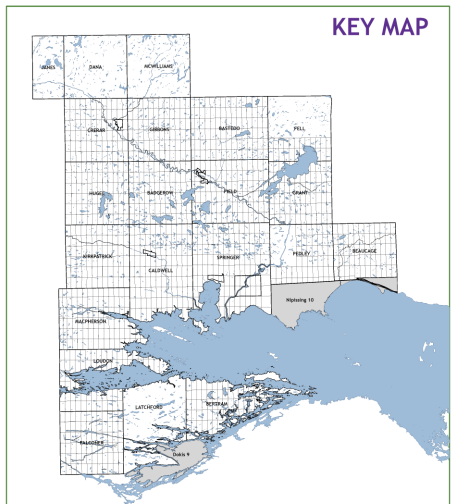
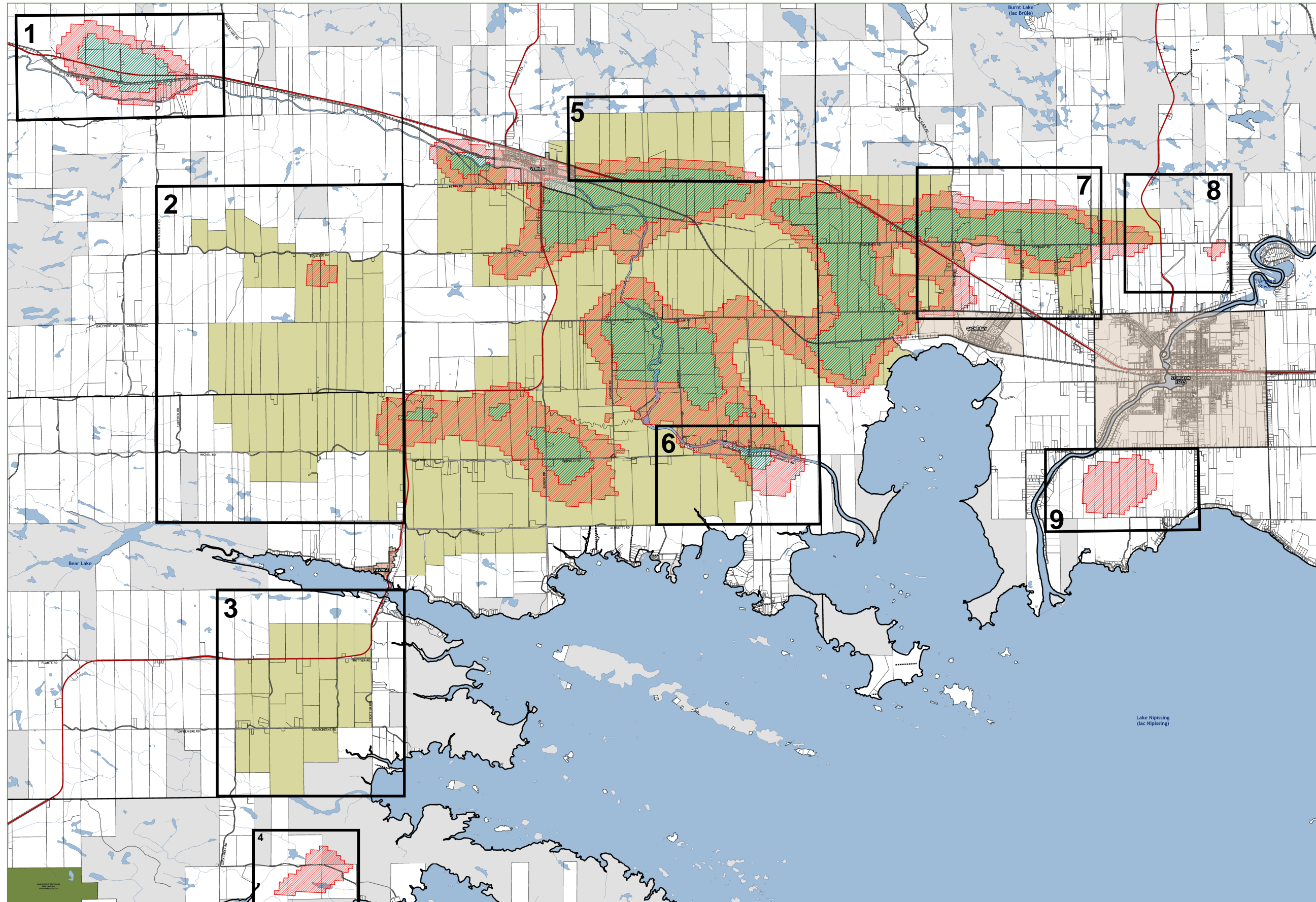
Appendix 1 – Key Map with Draft Agricultural Designation (Version 6) and OMAFA LEAR data

Appendix 2 – Agricultural Advisory Committee Recommended Revisions

Reference Material:

[Planning Act, RSO 1990, as amended](#)

[Provincial Planning Statement, 2024](#)



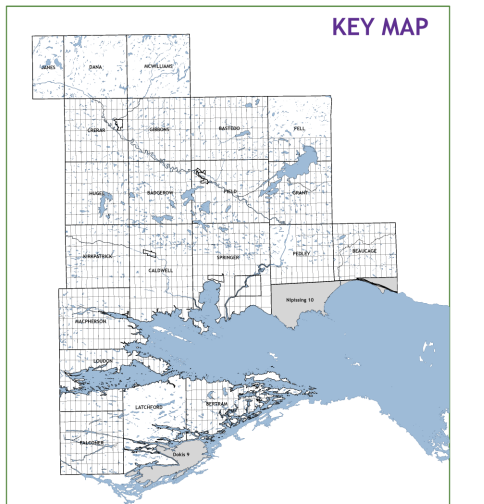
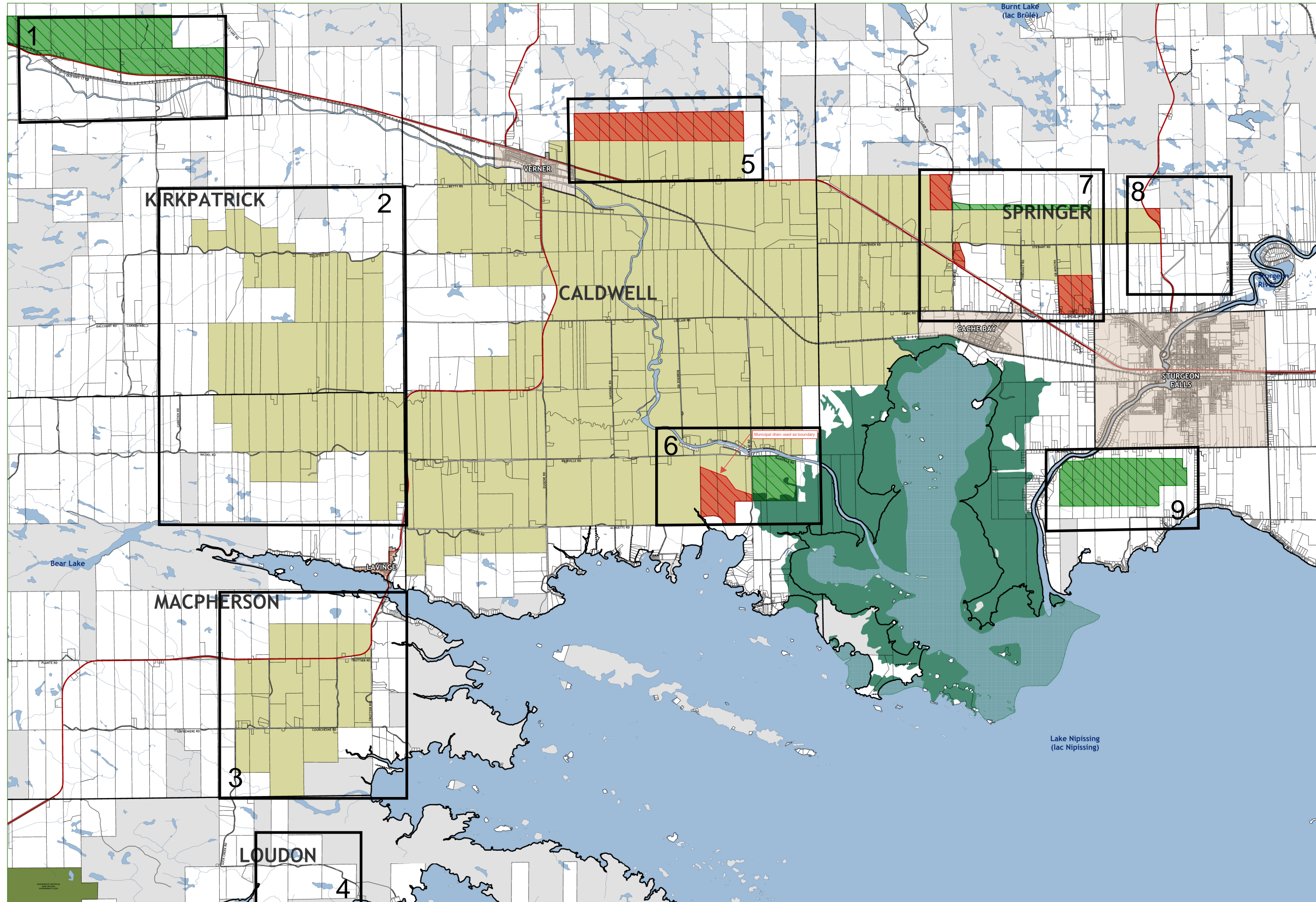
- AGRICULTURAL DESIGNATION**
- RECOMMENDED AGRICULTURAL DESIGNATION
 - PRIME AGRICULTURAL LANDS - BASED ON OMAFRA LEAR INFORMATION
 - POTENTIAL AGRICULTURAL LANDS - BASED ON OMAFRA LEAR INFORMATION



500 250 0 Metres

The information displayed on this map has been compiled from various sources. While every effort has been made to accurately depict the information, this map should not be relied on as being a precise indicator of locations. Copyright The Municipality of West Nipissing, 2024. All rights reserved.

May not be reproduced without permission. This is not survey data.



AGRICULTURAL DESIGNATION

- RECOMMENDED AGRICULTURAL DESIGNATION
- RECOMMENDED TO BE REMOVED
- RECOMMENDED TO BE ADDED
- PROVINCIAL WETLAND - EVALUATED
- OPEN WATER - EVALUATED



Metres
500 250 0

The information displayed on this map has been compiled from various sources. While every effort has been made to accurately depict the information, this map should not be relied on as being a precise indicator of locations. Copyright The Municipality of West Nipissing, 2024. All rights reserved.

May not be reproduced without permission.
This is not survey data.