

Forest management for maple syrup production and biodiversity conservation: assessing OECM compatibility in Nova Scotia working forests

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Nova Scotia's sugar woods are managed in various ways, yet all share the primary objective of maple syrup production. These forests have the potential to contribute to Canada's conservation goals if recognized as Other Effective areabased Conservation Measures (OECMs). To better understand management practices in Nova Scotia sugar woods, and advance their recognition as OECMs, the Nova Scotia Working Woodlands Trust (NSWWT) launched a targeted research project with maple syrup producers. This project has included a literature review of best practices for sugar woods, a province wide maple syrup producer survey to compare findings, and field visits to observe ontheground management practices. While syrup production remains the focus, these forests also support a range of ecosystem services and biodiversity values. Next steps in this project are to expand research into common management practices with additional maple syrup producers; partner with a maple syrup producer to promote syrup production and biodiversity conservation objectives; and finally, evaluate how NSWWT can support OECM recognition in ways that uphold strong conservation outcomes.

Keywords: OECMs, sugar woods, forest management practices, maple syrup production, ecosystem services

Poster presentation