



habitat

LA NATURE À L'ŒUVRE

TOWN OF HUDSON NATURAL AREAS CONSERVATION PLAN

CONSULTATIONS REPORT





HABITAT

Habitat is a Montreal-based environmental solutions company whose mission is to accelerate the ecological transition.

It helps organizations across all sectors integrate nature into their strategic decisions, promoting the adoption of practices that strengthen their resilience to climate change and support biodiversity conservation.

Over the past few years, Habitat has supported a diverse client base with its cutting-edge services in biodiversity measurement and modeling, ecosystem services assessment, ecosystem management, and sustainable land use planning. Habitat's Research and Development team collaborates with several universities, research centers, and non-governmental organizations to facilitate the application of the best available science.

Composed of a team of highly qualified professionals in biology, geography, forestry, and ecology, Habitat offers innovative solutions at the cutting edge of science.



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1. INTRODUCTION

To inform the development of its Nature Areas Conservation Plan, the Town of Hudson commissioned Habitat to carry out a series of public consultation activities. Specifically, three activities were conducted: a survey on the importance of natural areas, an informational and workshop evening, and a formal public consultation.

The aim of these consultation activities was to inform the public on the conservation plan development, and to integrate citizens' values into the decision-making process. The reflections obtained from citizens during these three activities were taken into account in updating the Conservation Plan, both in prioritizing the natural areas to be conserved, and in considering and implementing the recommended actions in the Action Plan. The following sections provides details and results from each of these consultation activities.

Note: Habitat also carried out a consultation of the environmental organizations present on Hudson's territory. The aim of this consultation was to contribute to the reflection and identification of levers and constraints to the implementation of a Conservation Plan. The results of this consultation are not included in this report and are presented in the planning framework section of the conservation plan.

2. SURVEY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF NATURAL AREAS

2.1. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

To provide the Town of Hudson with an economic valuation analysis of the ecological services provided by natural areas, Habitat collaborated with the Canada Research Chair in Ecological Economics (CRCEE) to conduct a survey of the population's willingness to pay for the conservation of natural areas. The aim of the survey was to establish how much the population is willing to pay in a dollar amount to conserve a natural area, based on interview questions (online survey). The survey was also aimed to gauge the population perceptions on the current and future role of the township in local conservation efforts. The questions were validated with the Town of Hudson before the survey was put online on the Town's website, sent to the population and also printed out and available from the town office.

The survey was open to the Hudson population during the month of October 2024.

2.2. RESULTS

Between October 7 and 27, 2024, 598 people responded to the online survey. Of these, 560 responses were taken into account in the following analysis, the remaining respondents being minors (7) or non-residents (31). The results of the survey are presented in this section.

To ensure that all those surveyed had the same understanding of the term 'natural area', a definition was provided at the start of the survey. The definition states that "a natural area is a forest, wetland, shoreline or body of water. A natural area is undeveloped and may include trails. The conservation of a natural area implies that it will remain undeveloped, but that improvements such as public access may take place".

The overwhelming majority of survey respondents are local homeowners (93%). 41% of those surveyed said they had been living in Hudson for over 20 years, with the remaining responses divided between 0 to 2 years (10%), 3 to 5 years (19%), 6 to 10 years (14%) and 10 to 20 years (16%) (**Figure 1**).



Figure 1. Number of years respondents have been residing in Hudson.

Most survey respondents live less than 50 meters from a natural area, the majority of them close to a forest (278 responses), followed by a wetland (171) or a watercourse (130). Only 140 respondents indicated that their home is not located near a natural area (**Figure 2**).

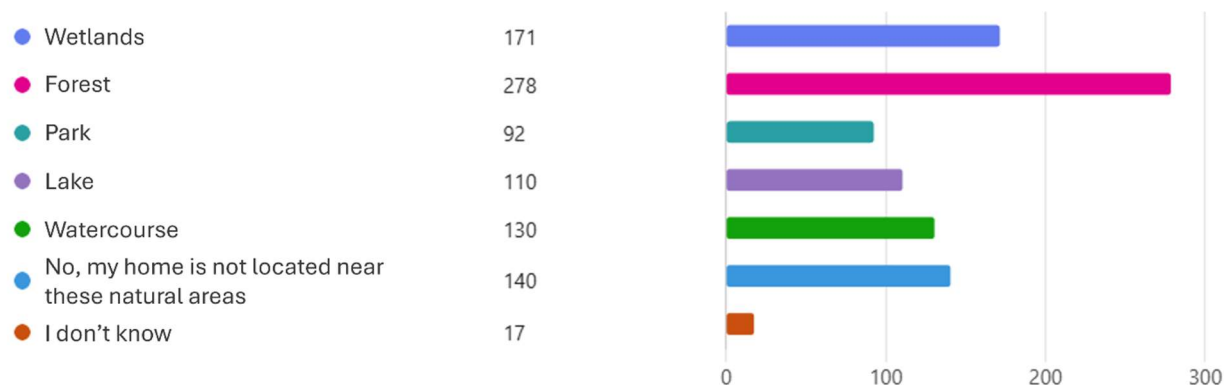


Figure 2. Type of natural areas near respondents' residence.

Of those surveyed, only 4 (1%) said they had never visited a natural area. The other respondents indicated that they visit a natural area with varying frequency: 24% visit more than 5 times a week, 26% 3 to 5 times a week, 23% between 1 and 2 times a week, 13% 2 to 3 times a month, and 14% once a month. The reasons for using natural areas are varied, with the majority of respondent practicing a pedestrian activity (walking, hiking, dog walking, running, jogging; 543 responses). The second most popular activity is observing nature and landscapes or using educational trails (330 responses). Finally, in third place, natural areas are visited by the population for well-being or spiritual purposes (relaxation, meditation, landscape contemplation; 284 responses) (**Figure 3**).

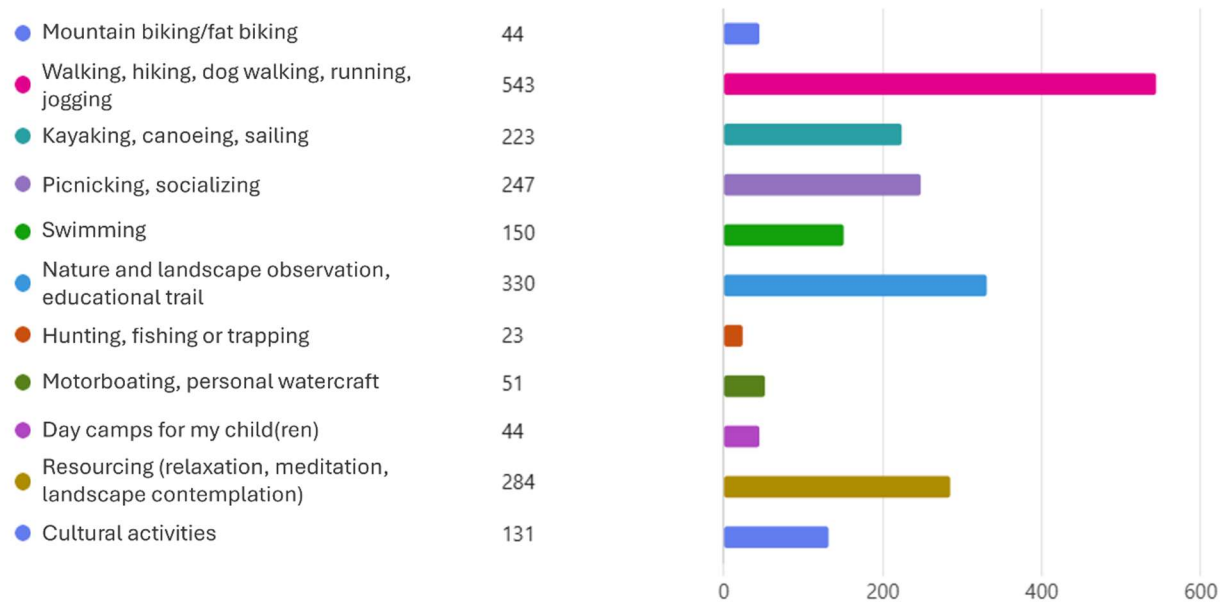


Figure 3. Activities practiced in natural areas.

Of surveyed respondents, 85% indicated that natural areas contribute greatly to their quality of life (475 responses), while 12% rated the contribution of natural areas to their quality of life as moderate (65). Finally, 14 people (or 2%) answered that natural areas contribute little to their quality of life, and 6 (1%) people consider that they do not contribute to their quality of life (**Figure 4**).

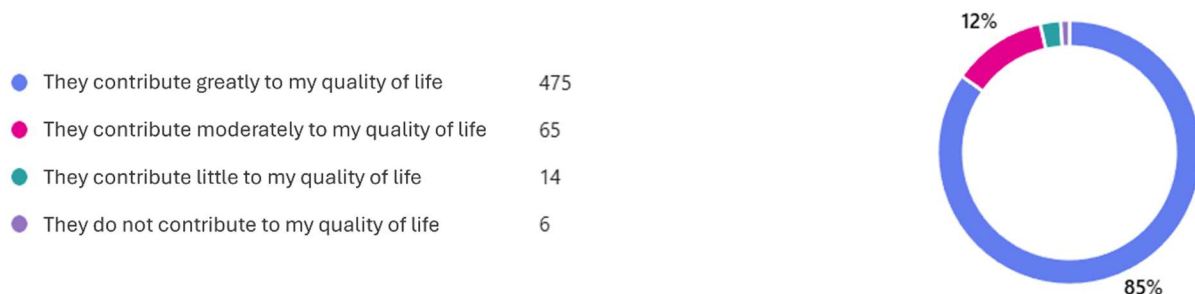


Figure 4. Contribution of natural areas to respondents' quality of life.

One of the survey questions asked respondents about their level of concern regarding the loss of natural areas in Hudson. Amongst respondents, 70% considered themselves extremely concerned about this loss (390 responses), 16% considered themselves very concerned (92 responses), 9% were moderately concerned. Finally, 13 people (2%) considered themselves not very concerned, and 14 people (3%) not at all concerned (**Figure 5**).

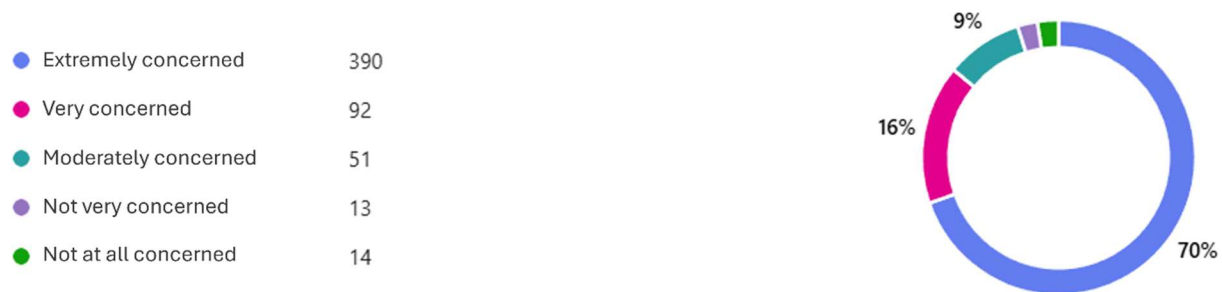


Figure 5. Level of concern for the loss of natural areas.

To the question "To what extent should the Town of Hudson conserve natural areas?", the majority of respondents thought the Town should do "much more" to conserve natural areas (389 responses), 101 people thought they should do "a little more", 43 people thought "no change" was necessary, 9 people considered the Town should do "a little less", and 6 people chose the "a lot less" option. 12 respondents indicated they didn't know to what extent the town should conserve natural areas (**Figure 6**).

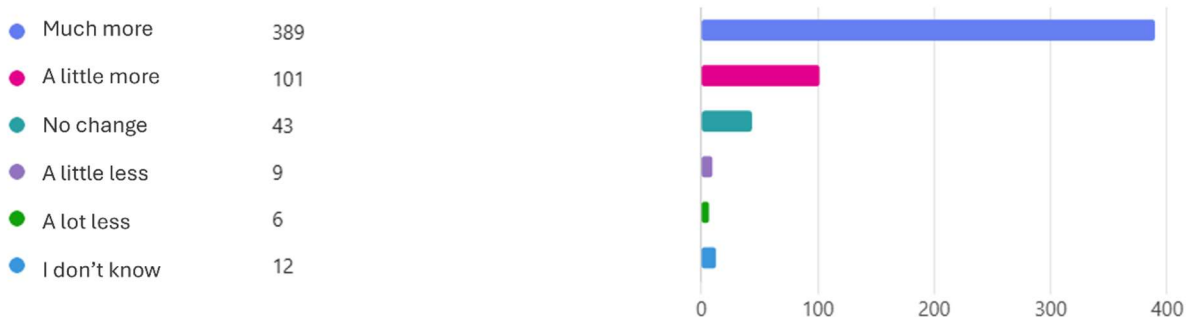


Figure 6. Effort the Town of Hudson should put in conserving natural areas.

The survey also asked people to give a level of importance (from very important to not important) to different reasons for conserving natural areas. The reasons chosen as the most important were the conservation of floral and faunal habitats, access to quality and quantity of drinking water, and flood mitigation (**Figure 7**).

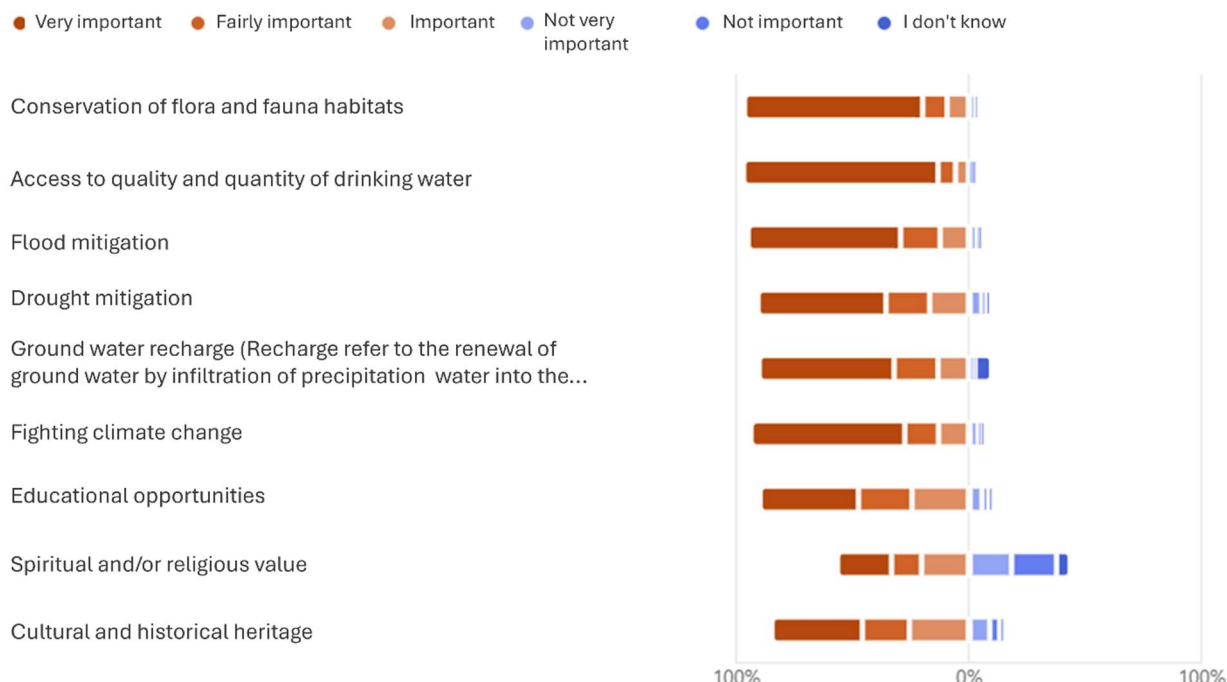


Figure 7. Responses to the survey question "How important are the following reasons for conserving natural areas?".

Another survey question asked who should be responsible for conserving Hudson's natural area. Five choices were available: individuals, the municipality, the regional county municipality, the provincial government or federal government to determine who should have the responsibility for overseeing and putting in place this conservation. The results were sharply divided between the five choices (**Figure 8**).

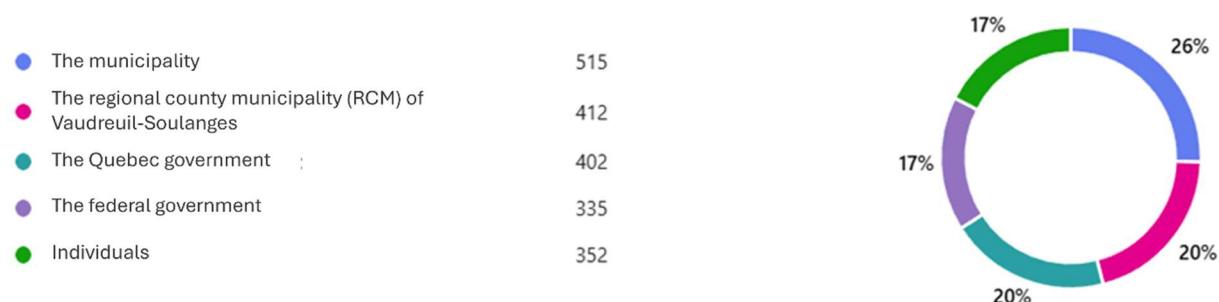


Figure 8. Responses to the question "Who do you think should be responsible for conserving Hudson's natural areas?".

Of surveyed respondents, 41% indicated that they would like to conserve a natural area on their property (231 responses), while 31% chose the "I don't know" option (172 respondents) (**Figure 9**). To the question asking whether people were interested to know more about organizations and programs that support the voluntary conservation of natural areas on private land, 63% answered in the affirmative (350 people), 21% showed no interest (117 people), and 17% didn't know (93 people).



Figure 9. Percentage of respondents interested in conserving natural areas on their land.

The survey asked whether the town should set up a program to acquire natural areas for conservation purposes. To this question, 81% of respondents said yes (451 answers), 10% said no (57 answers), and 9% said they didn't know (52 answers). Of all surveyed respondents, 69,5% indicated that they would be willing to contribute financially to such a program (389 responses). These respondents were then asked to indicate a range of dollar amounts, from \$5 to upwards of \$600, for which they would be willing to support a natural area conservation program. Several price ranges were selected, with an average amount of \$140 per person per year (**Figure 10**).

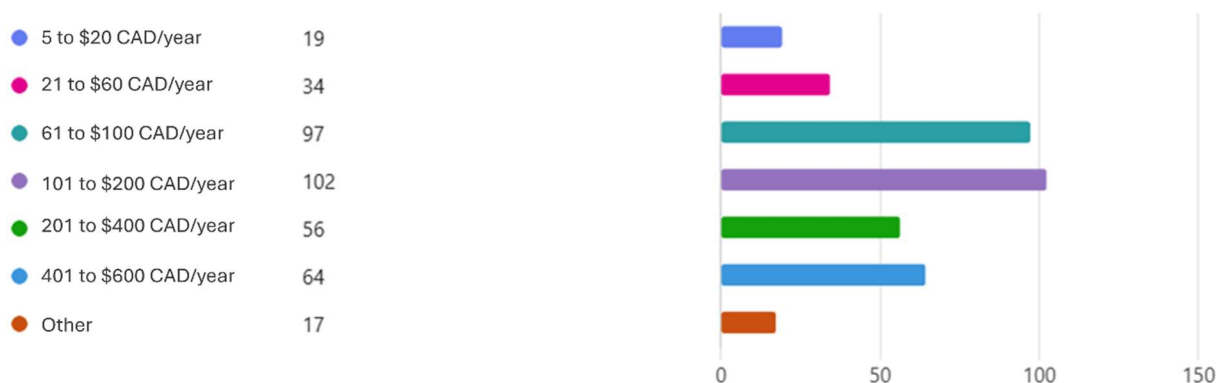


Figure 10. Responses to the survey question "Which of the following ranges of amounts would you accept to support this program?".

Those who indicated that they did not wish to contribute financially to a natural area acquisition program (171 people), gave as their reasons that the Town of Hudson already has other funds from taxes collected (81 responses); that natural areas should rather be acquired and conserved by provincial or federal governments or conservation organizations (78 responses); not having enough annual income (67 responses); or did not have confidence in the proper use of donations received (43 responses). Other reasons were also chosen, such as the impracticality irrelevance of this type of program ; that conserving natural areas is not a priority; that it would have no effect on conserving biodiversity or improving the climate; that the population is not responsible for the loss of natural areas and therefore should not pay for it; or that respondents prefer to make a donation to support another cause (health, education, sport, culture, etc.) . Each of these options received 21 responses or less.

Finally, survey respondents were asked to choose which project should be prioritized in the conservation plan, given the Town's limited budget. The project receiving the most votes (70%) was the purchase and conservation of Sandy Beach and its surrounding natural areas (**Figure 11**). In second place, respondents indicated that the Town should instead invest in improving the natural areas already held. Finally, the third choice was the rehabilitation of Pine Lake.

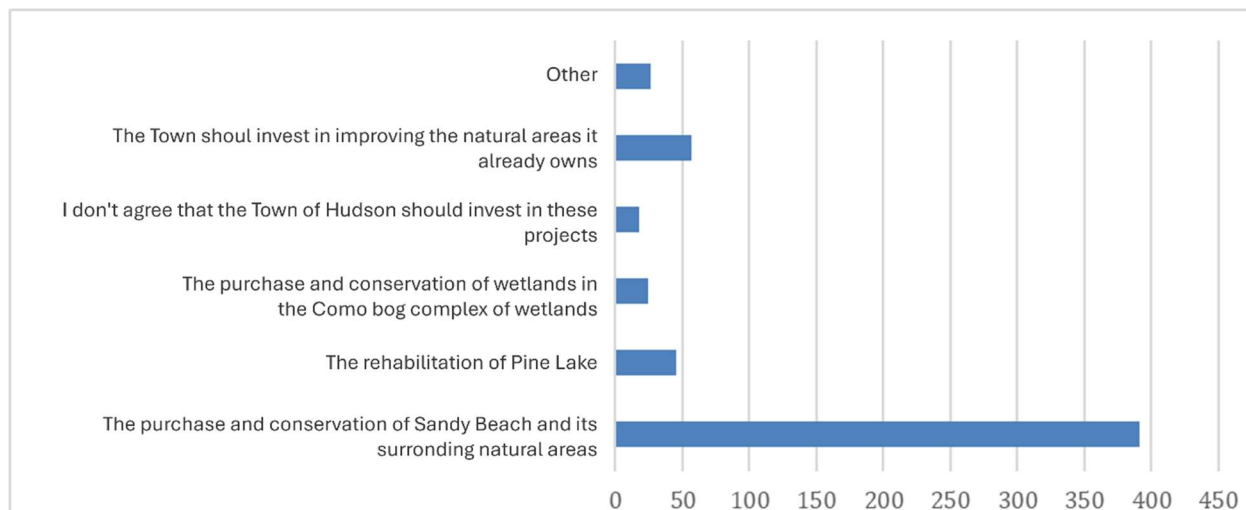


Figure 11. Response to the question "Given that the Town of Hudson has a limited budget, which of the following projects should be prioritized in the Conservation Plan?".

The last section of the survey asked provided a demographic portrait of respondents based on age, with 223 respondents aged 65 and over; 140 aged 55 to 64; 82 aged 45 to 54; 85 aged 35 to 44; 29 aged 25 to 34; and 1 aged 18 to 24 (**Figure 12**).

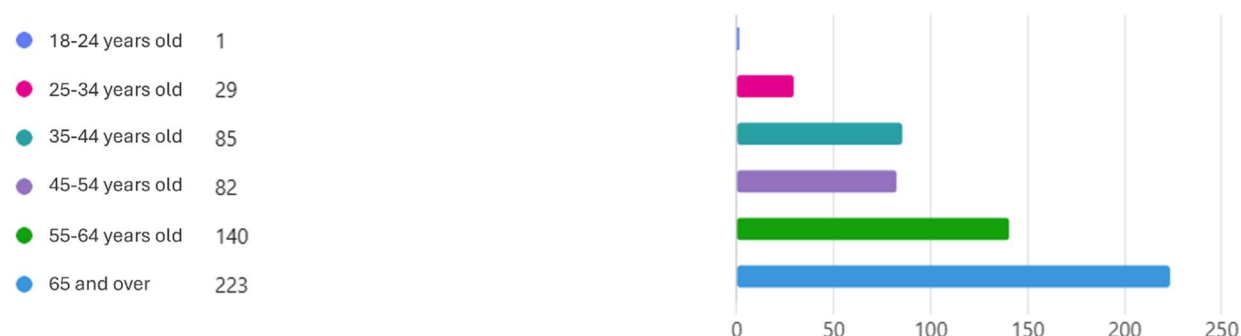


Figure 12. Age of the respondents.

2.3. COMMENTS SHARED BY THE PUBLIC

The final question of the survey allowed respondents to make suggestions or comments on the conservation of natural areas. The varied responses highlighted several concerns that were taken into account when considering the conservation plan and action plan.

This section presents an extract of shared comments.



« Look at protecting the entire Viviry corridor in Hudson as a humanized landscape of great interest (paysage humanisé de grand intérêt). »

« Look to other towns for advice and guidance on how they protected their green spaces. Hudson needs to look beyond themselves and look to others who have been innovative and successful. Example: land swap deal for dunes lake woods protection in St. Lazare, proper parks plan as in Beaconsfield, etc... also tougher regulations for building on wetlands and big areas, more research into acquiring government grants to protect green spaces. »

« We need stricter laws in place to prevent bogs from being developed. I also think we need to take a tougher stance on improper management of the riparian zone. Fine people if they are not being adequate stewards of the river. »

« The town needs to work with all levels of government, as well as nature trusts, to preserve natural habitat for both citizen enjoyment and nature conservation (flora and fauna). »

« Our town is defined by the Ottawa River, and Sandy Beach uniquely provides a trail along this river. Before this year, it was used by people of all sorts, young and old. It is accessible from the town center, where there are schools and senior residences. Together with Jack Layton Park, it provides a remarkable variety of habitats for education and appreciation. It is a unique gem that must be protected. »

« Pine Lake has been a Hudson fixture for the last 75 years and should be restored. It is the first natural feature that visitors see coming into Hudson. The lake front should be attractively landscaped. »

« Given the current climate and biodiversity crisis it is clear that we need all of these areas to be kept as free from human intervention as possible. Natural climate solutions are the best, fastest, and cheapest way to combat climate change.”

« Our natural areas of the Town of Hudson are what makes it so special. It is why I love it here. Let’s protect that. »

« The town needs to explore all funding possibilities (grants, etc.) much more actively and preserve as much green space as possible. Volunteers could do this on the town's behalf. We need to stop building and preserve. »

« The natural areas are what attracted me to Hudson a few years ago from the island of Montreal. It is restorative to be able to see the trees, the water and hear the insects, birds and small animals (frogs!) all around. We face multiple challenges now and in the future that threaten to destroy the beautiful landscape that ensures some level of biodiversity on these lands. A concerted effort must be made to keep the natural areas that exist and to expand them. Efforts on the individual level are great, but to effect real change, all levels of government must be on board. I am confident that the town of Hudson can continue to stand out in its pursuit of being a haven of peace full of spaces to retreat to. »

« L'enjeu des lieux humides (et leur protection) est primordial pour préserver l'identité/la raison d'être de la Ville d'Hudson dans sa forme actuelle. »

« Mettre plus de panneaux éducatifs et mettre plus de poubelle à proximité des sentiers. »

« A huge part of what makes Hudson so special are the natural areas. We have a unique opportunity to protect and fight for these natural areas which will help serve our community in this critical time. If residents are educated on the importance of these complex ecosystems, especially wetlands, they would be encouraged to support their conservation together! »

« The natural areas are the reason my family chose to live in Hudson. We should do all we can to keep these resources intact, for ourselves and for future generations. »



« I would prefer that the town focuses on rehabilitating existing lands owned by the town (i.e. Pine Lake, forests). For larger projects, such as saving Sandy Beach or the Como Bog complex, I believe these are very important projects, but the acquisitions and subsequent management should be led by reputable conservation organizations with significant capacity (i.e. Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Nature Action) that attract federal (i.e. Natural Heritage Conservation Program) and provincial funding and can accept donations from multiple sources including private landowners that have the means. An important program to consider is the Ecological Gifts Program, which may make the selling process more attractive for the current owner (i.e. significant tax breaks for the seller, and the lands would be protected in perpetuity through a recognized conservation organization). It is very important for these lands to be acquired for conservation and climate reasons, but also for Hudson's cultural heritage. I feel that this is the most realistic way for this to happen. »

« The Town should obtain grants or tax credits from various government(s) to encourage landowners to donate privately held land currently making up the trail networks to ensure they exist in perpetuity and not be sold to developers when those lands form part of an estate settlement to the next generation. »

« Please protect Como bog. We live on Hodgson Street and see deer and lots of other wildlife. Need to protect them and the few forests left in Hudson! »

« Hudson needs to take advantage of Federal and Provincial grants/programs to protect new natural areas. Hudson should not use their limited resources to acquire these directly. Hudson should have the use their limited resources to work on areas they already own. Example: Eliminate invasive plants and focus on native ones instead. »

« Les changements climatiques sont présentes, il y aura de plus en plus d'inondations, pluies torrentiels, sécheresses, canicules... etc. la liste est longue et nos milieux naturels sont la réponse à soulager et résoudre ces problèmes. LE FUTUR EST MAINTENANT, nos actions comptent! »

« Il y a plein de citoyens qui sont prêts à aider avec à protéger les endroits naturels, soit en faire des lever fonds, en nettoyant les milieux, ou en rechercher les fonds gouvernementale etc Je pense que la ville devrait trouver un meilleur façon de travailler avec des citoyens et de bénéficier de leur implication. »

« The Town needs to clearly delineate parks from natural areas. Parks are for people first, natural areas are for ecosystems first. In my view parks should be owned and maintained by the Town. Natural areas are best owned and stewarded by conservation organizations that have direct access to the technical resources needed. Public access to conserved natural areas should be decided by the conservation organization based on the ecosystems ability to support access. The Town should expand its park network to include Sandy Beach. Though a natural area, it is used extensively by people and as such would likely best be considered a park, owned and managed by the Town. »

« When the town invests in preserving natural areas it should be sure to illustrate with educational signage the importance of doing so. We all need to be reminded about the benefits of preservation on a daily basis. »

« The charm of Hudson would be nothing if we continue to develop it and do not focus on these important natural areas. »

« Mettre plus de descriptif sur les lieux pour permettre aux gens d'identifier faune et flore »

« Sandy beach est un espace naturel extrêmement important à conserver et un merveilleux endroit que les citoyens de Hudson »



apprécient énormément. Merci de faire tout ce vous pouvez pour le conserver. »

« Love the idea of reserving a section of our large yards to conservation. I keep a few thousand square feet wild as a connector to my adjacent green space and neighbour who also has left a space wild. Others have turned their yards into big lawns which is a water sucking monoculture. People need to be educated about how useless a green lawn actually is. »

« La raison principale pour laquelle nous avons choisi Hudson pour y vivre est ses milieux naturels. Il est impératif de les protéger, c'est ce qui fait le charme du village. »

« I think one of the foremost things that drive my commitment to conservation is that you can never really get back what is lost - restoration and human designs are commendable but not on par to what the natural environment provides, to both humans and the planet, whether it is biodiversity, carbon storage, water filtering, fighting climate change, wildlife habitat, flood or drought resilience, mental and physical wellness, and so on. I also believe conservation and human use can be done simultaneously and this is why saving all of Sandy Beach (including #2 Royalview) is a top priority. Sandy Beach is a GEM for Hudson, recreationally for families, accessible for multiple generations, and a tourist attraction to bring non-residents into our little town shops. Hudson is fortunate to still have so many preserved natural areas in the 21st Century where development seems king. It is why my family moved here, we love that about Hudson. Please conserve these spaces. »

« Great to go all green but you should aim for a balanced solution. Step by step. »

« I believe that the nature trails in Hudson greatly contribute to the overall quality of life in Hudson. I think that they should all be interconnected so that they become more important than they are individually. Also, there should be some

maintenance done to most of the walking trails. »

« Involve different stakeholders in conversations (age, cultures, professions, etc). Guided tours of different areas with conservationist of different ethnic background to teach us about the benefits of these spaces. Ex: owl walks, bat walks. It also seems that the conservation area behind Nichoir was supposed to be managed by the town (cutting of fields yearly to allow for different birds to nest, etc) - which doesn't seem to have been done for years now.... Education and raising awareness. And thank you for asking for our feedback - would be great to see what comes out of these surveys. »

« L'implication des citoyens est primordiale afin qu'il y ait un sentiment d'attachement et d'appartenance. Des corvées bénévoles organisées par la ville seraient vraiment un moyen intéressant. Des conférenciers par des experts en milieux humides, forestiers, nappe aquifère, etc., payés par la ville permettraient que les citoyens comprennent d'avantage l'importance des milieux naturels dans et autour de Hudson. Hudson pourrait également se trouver des alliés par des petits investissements pour la plantation d'arbres par des organismes locaux impliquant les jeunes des écoles locales et impliquer les aînés aussi. Je crois que beaucoup des jeunes arrivants, jeunes familles sont très détachées de la richesse des milieux naturels de Hudson et prennent pour acquis que ce sera toujours là. Il faut que les citoyens comprennent l'importance et l'urgence d'agir afin de protéger et conserver nos milieux naturels. »

« Conserving natural spaces (wetlands, forests, woods, grasslands, meadows) is critical to preserving the character, quality and livability of Hudson, as well as doing our part to fight climate change. This will mean investing to purchase lands now in private hands as well as encouraging people to donate lands or put them in a land trust. This will be expensive for a town



of our size, so we need to leverage as many other public and private sources of funds as we can. This could mean the CMM, Land Conservancy of Canada, the provincial and federal governments, as well as private donors. Ensuring the council

and staff are apprised of all the options is important. It is also essential that citizens understand what they can do, either to contribute in cash or lands. »

3. INFORMATIONAL EVENING AND WORKSHOPS

3.1. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

With a view to informing and raising awareness among the Town of Hudson's administration and population on the concepts put forward in the Natural Areas Conservation Plan, Habitat, in collaboration with the Town, hosted a presentation summarizing and explaining the aim and steps in the development of a conservation plan, results from the analyses carried out on biodiversity data for the territory of Hudson to inform the plan, and the main results of the survey on the importance of the Town's natural areas.

Following this presentation, two workshops were proposed to the participants to take into account their ideas and civic values within the development of the Conservation Plan.

On November 27, 2024, 54 people signed up to take part in a 2-hour evening at the Hudson Community Center. Participants were divided into 13 round tables, enabling the two proposed workshops to be carried out in small groups.

In the first workshop, participants were invited to reflect on the development of conservation priorities for Town of Hudson. Participants were asked to identify on a map (**Figure 13**) the three natural areas they

considered to be priorities for conservation, considering their ecological importance and value to the community. The various natural areas of the territory were divided into 10 delimited zones.

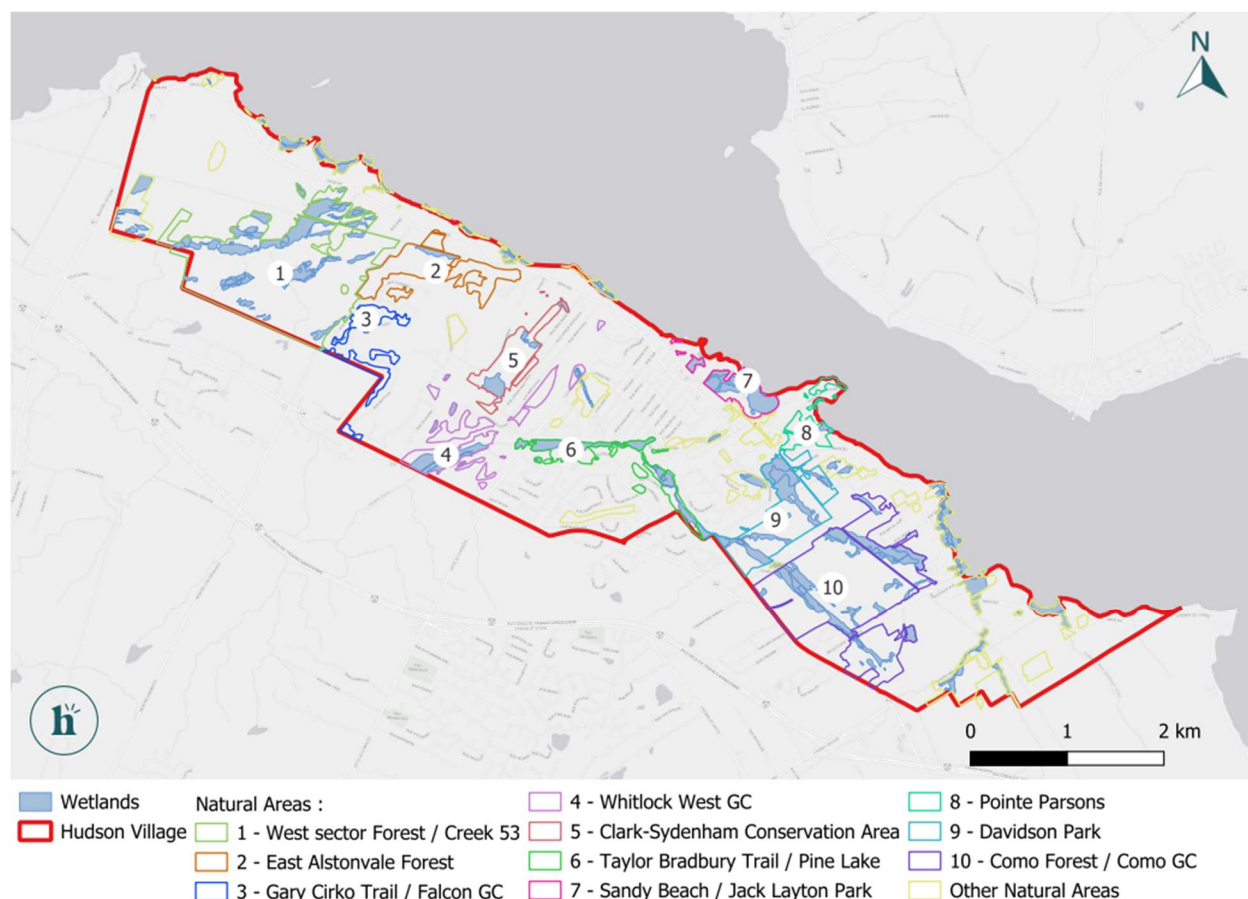


Figure 13. Map used for the workshop to prioritize natural areas.

At the second workshop, participants were asked to share their ideas and suggestions on the solutions available to be implemented for the conservation of natural areas in the Town of Hudson. Ideas were collected on large piece of paper and each table was asked to share their ideas back to the wider group.

The consultative approach put forward by Habitat for these workshops enabled population to be consulted in order to gather their opinions and thus co-construct locally driven proposals for action, considering both environmental and social concerns.

3.2. RESULTS

The voting maps from Workshop 1, where participants identified 3 natural areas to prioritize, were compiled to produce **Figure 14**. Natural areas are represented according to a prioritization gradient, from purple for those receiving few or no votes, to yellow for those receiving the most votes. The results of the vote compilation are presented in **Table 1** below.



Table 1 . Number of votes and prioritization value by natural area sector.

NAME OF NATURAL AREA SECTORS IDENTIFIED	SECTOR NUMBER (SEE FIGURE 5)	PRIORITIZATION VALUE BASED ON VOTE COUNT
West sector Forest - Creek 53	1	15.4
East Alstonvale Forest	2	22.4
Gray Circo Trail - Falcon GC	3	0
Whitlock West GC	4	4
Clark-Sydenham conservation area	5	3
Taylor Bradbury Trail - Lake Pine	6	24
Sandy Beach - Jack Layton Park	7	63.8
Pointe Parsons	8	3
Davidson Park	9	47.4
Como Forest - Como GC	10	26
Other	11	0

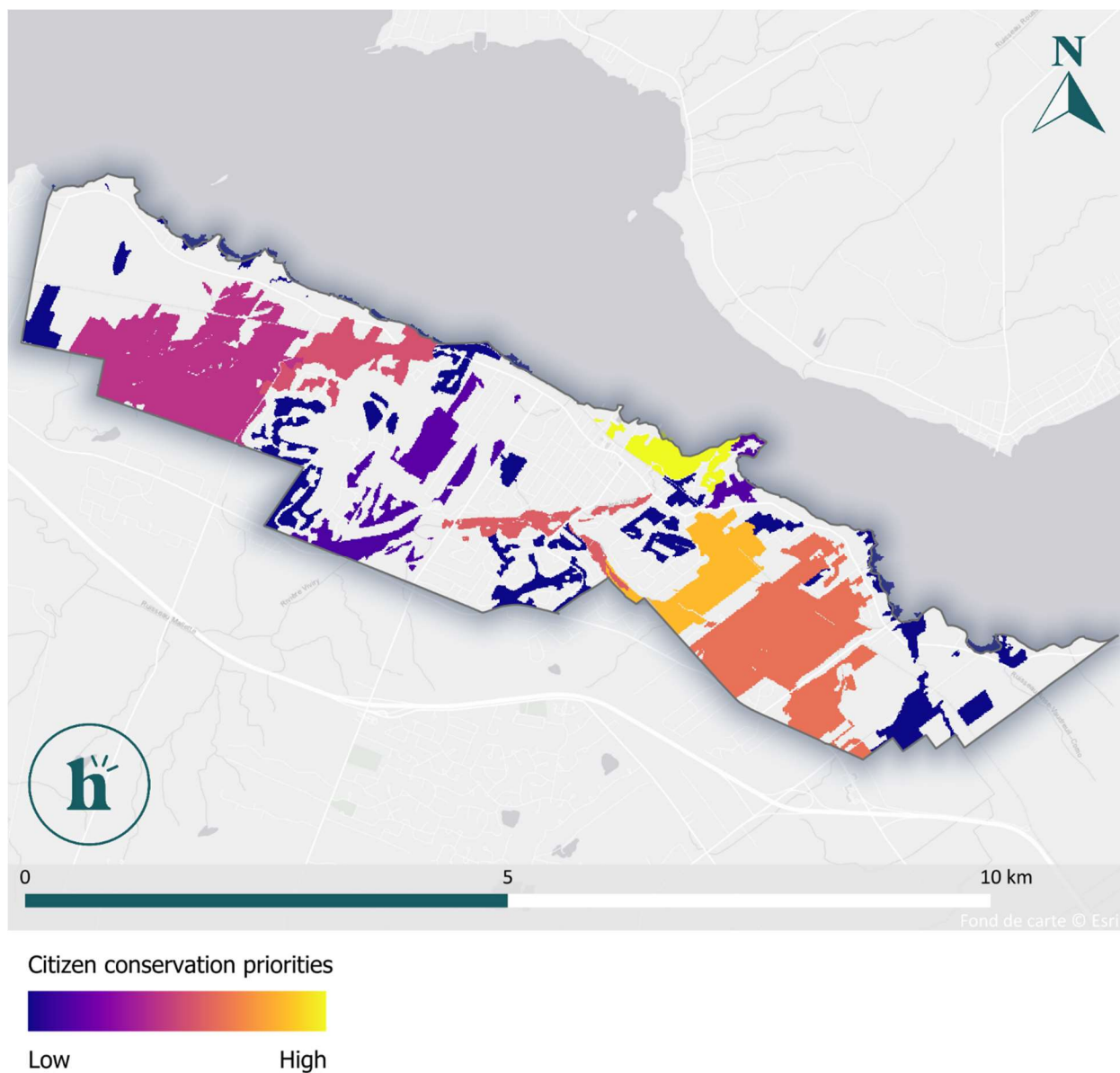


Figure 14. Prioritization map of natural areas in the Hudson territory, derived from citizen votes.

Responses to Workshop 2 were recorded on a large answer sheet at each table. These responses were collated and sorted by issue (conservation, regulation, development), by responsible party (federal government, provincial government, RCM, town, population), and by type of natural area. **Table 2** presents the themes, issues, actions and responsible parties that can be implemented by type of natural area. Where actions were linked to a particular site on the territory, this is indicated in the last column of the table.



The elements proposed by the participants can be summarized under 6 main thematic headings:

- Conservation: protecting, acquiring and restoring natural areas.
- Regulations: Introducing new policies or reinforcing existing ones.
- Development: Improving access to nature through infrastructure.
- Awareness-raising: Development of educational activities for the public.
- Financing: Finding funding and creating budget envelopes specific to conservation.
- Responsibility: sharing conservation responsibilities between the various stakeholders.

The various actions proposed are divided among several responsible parties: the federal and provincial governments, the RCM, the Town of Hudson, non-profit organizations working in the area and the public.

The actions listed enable the conservation of natural areas on both public and private land. Various types of natural area are targeted, with priority given to wetlands.

Table 2 . Themes, issues, actions and responsible parties by type of natural area proposed by people who attended the workshop on November 27, 2024.

THEMES	ISSUE/ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	TYPE OF NATURAL AREA	LINKED PRIORITY SITES
Conservation	Fighting invasive species	Town, Population	Private land, forests	-
	Use of indigenous plant species	Town, Non-profit organization, Population	Forests	-
	Acquisition of sensitive land	RCM, Town	Private land, wetlands	-
	Audubon program for golf courses	Non-profit organization, Town	Private land	-
	Acquisition and protection of Sandy Beach	Town, Non-profit organization, Population	-	Sandy Beach
	Protecting wetlands from landfill	Town, Non-profit organization	Wetlands and hydric areas	-
	Pine Lake ecological restoration	Town, Non-profit organization	-	Pine Lake
	Government commitment to the Convention on Wetlands (RAMSAR)	Federal Government	Wetlands and hydric areas	-
	Maintaining bird migration routes	Federal government, Town	Rivers, wetlands	-
Regulations	Prohibit construction in sensitive areas	Town, RCM	Wetlands, forests	-
	Conservation tax credits	Provincial government, Town	Private land	-
	Expropriation at fair market value	Town, RCM	Private land	-
	Supervising real estate developers	Town, Provincial government	Private land	-
	Prohibit development in flood-prone areas	Town, RCM	Wetlands	-
	<i>Pay-per-use</i> for non-residents	Town, Population	Private land, trails	-



THEMES	ISSUE/ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	TYPE OF NATURAL AREA	LINKED PRIORITY SITES
Design	Improving public access to natural areas	Town, Population	Trails	Sandy Beach
	Signage in natural areas	Town, Population	Trails, Forests	-
	Development of multi-use trails	Town, Non-profit organization	All types	-
	Riverbank restoration	Town, Non-profit organization	Wetlands and hydric areas	-
	Creating educational zones in natural areas	Town, Non-profit organization	All types	-
	Promoting sustainable tourism	Town, Population	Trails	Sandy Beach
Awareness	Native species education	Town, Non-profit organization, Population	Forests, private land	-
	Citizen workshops	Non-profit organization, Town	All types	-
	Citizen involvement in local projects	Town, Non-profit organization, Population	All types	-
	Campaigns for private planting	Town, Non-profit organization, Population	Private land	-
Financing	Ecological taxation	Town	All types	-
	Collective fund for land acquisition	Town, Non-profit organization, RCM	Private land	-
Liability	Sharing responsibilities between players	Federal government, Town, Population	All types	-

This information is considered and helps to inform actions proposed in the Action Plan of the Natural Area Conservation Plan for the Town of Hudson.



4. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

4.1. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Finally, a public consultation was organized in collaboration with the Town of Hudson, to present the results of the workshops and the preliminary versions of the Natural areas Conservation Plan and action plan, offering participants the opportunity to submit their comments. A survey was open for two weeks following the consultation to gauge the public's appreciation of the elements presented, and to provide an opportunity for them to offer suggestions for additional content.

The public consultation was held on March 11, 2025 at the Town of Hudson Community Center and was open to the public in person, as well as available online.

4.2. RESULTS

Of the 60 people registered to attend the public consultation, 40 were present in the room and 20 followed the online presentation.

The presentation provided an overview of Habitat's approach to proposing the Natural Areas Conservation Plan, as well as a short review of the biodiversity portrait and analyses previously carried out. Habitat then presented how the results of the survey and workshops were used to inform the thinking behind the proposed Action Plan. The vision and strategic directions proposed for the Action Plan were presented, along with a selection of the resulting conservation actions, to be carried out over a 3, 5 or 10-year timescale. An application of the targeted actions was then applied and presented on one of the priority sites targeted for conservation. Finally, the presentation concluded with an outline of the next steps, including the opening of the survey and the drafting of the final version of the conservation plan.

The questions raised mainly concerned the continuation of the Action Plan in the event of a change of municipal team, as well as the feasibility of implementing voluntary conservation actions with private owners.

A total of 11 people responded to the survey available following the public consultation. Respondents indicated an average level of satisfaction of 3.60/5 with the integration of workshop results into the conservation plan; 3.55/5 with the proposed vision; 4/5 with the strategic orientations on which the conservation plan and action plan are based; and 3.45/5 with the number and variety of conservation actions proposed.

The results and reflections of this consultation exercise were used to fine-tune the Natural Areas Conservation Plan so that it is better in line with the interests of the population, the commitments and ambitions of the Town of Hudson, and corresponds to the established portrait of the territory.

4.3. COMMENTS ON THE CONSERVATION PLAN

Respondents to the post-consultation survey were able to provide suggestions and comments on the vision, directions and actions.

« I think more can be considered regarding key and/or large properties that are currently owned privately. For example, if a private property is situated along a key eco-corridor, the town could have a bylaw to prevent its further division or dwelling densification. The town might also consider having a bylaw in place to purchase part of such a property with the proprietor's agreement with the rest remaining as the proprietor's. »

« I think we're missing a monitoring aspect. Right now, for example, trails aren't used by many people who fear running into loose dogs. »

« I am wondering how any existing or potential fencing or other such barriers might interfere with eco-corridors and whether this should also be included in the plan. »

« Land stewardship for the common good, learning from First Nations. »

« Revitalization plan for the Viviry Corridor; characterization on heritage and cultural value of Viviry Corridor; interconnectedness with neighbouring natural areas to ensure interconnectivity between local and regional corridors. »

« We as a town could reach out the landowners with land in the ecological corridors identified and explain to them the plan to make sure they understand. If they are interested in conservation, actively support them with actions that have to be taken to do so. »

« Organize activities for children and families to promote active participation in conservation. »

« Le plan ne contient que de bonnes choses mais selon moi il est beaucoup trop ambitieux étant donné la taille de la ville de Hudson. Je crois que nous avons besoin de cibler des initiatives réalistes selon les finances de la ville. »

« I trust the local schools will participate in spreading the word. »

« Il faudra sans doute parler avec les communautés voisines aussi et la communauté de Kanosake car nous partageons la rivière. »

« I think this is a good start. Like most, I would like to see more concrete plans for Sandy Beach. »

« Le plan tel que proposé dépend trop sur la bonne volonté des propriétaires privés. Ce n'est pas réaliste sans un cadre légal qui obligera les propriétaires à protéger les milieux naturels qui se trouvent sur leurs terrains. »



5. CONCLUSION

The public consultation allowed Habitat to more precisely identify the natural areas to be prioritized for conservation in Hudson, considering scientific knowledge and the concerns expressed by the community. Citizens stressed the urgency of preserving mature woodlands, wetlands and ecological corridors that ensure connectivity between the territory's various plant and wildlife habitats.

Discussions also highlighted strong support for incentives for owners, such as voluntary conservation and tax breaks, as well as the need for a more robust regulatory framework to oversee development. Several participants insisted on the importance of developing accessible natural spaces to foster cohabitation between conservation and environmentally friendly recreational uses.

Lastly, numerous citizen proposals focused on raising awareness and getting residents actively involved, whether through ecological restoration programs, educational projects or participation in wildlife and plant inventories. These contributions helped refine the Plan's orientations, so that it responds to the territory's specific issues while mobilizing the community in its implementation.

LINKS

The presentation shared at the information evening and workshops, as well as the presentation and recording of the public consultation, are available on the Town of Hudson website at the following link: <https://hudson.quebec/en/count-me-in/>



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