January 22, 2021

Request for Written Documentation of an Analysis of Ancient Forest Exploration and Research (AFER) Values Information

I have reviewed the reports on the AFER website to identify values data that should be considered during FMP development or implementation. The report with the most relevant information is The Catchacoma Ancient Forest Landscape: An Initial Inventory of Species and Habitats (Quinby, 2020).

The report contains a list of species found in the area north of Catchacoma Lake, derived mainly from a 2008 Stantec study looking at options for a road into Kawartha Highlands, as well as 2019 field work by AFER. The lists include species at risk, all of which are considered in the FMP except for the monarch butterfly, which is not highly impacted by forest operations. The report does not include specific geographic locations, which are required for observations to be included on values maps and in Area of Concern (AOC) planning.

There were two notable species reports:

1. The Stantec report noted that "The cerulean warbler is particularly common on this site, with half a dozen heard calling at various locations along the western half of the route…" With no specific geographic locations, and being greater than 10 years old, this report is not sufficient to delineate an AOC. However, this information suggests that a targeted spring survey would be of value, and will be considered during Bancroft District MNRF values collection work planning.
2. The report lists the lichen *Coenogonium pineti* as an S3 species, which could have an AOC applied to it if the report were verified and a geographic location determined. However, NHIC lists *C. pineti* as an S4? species, which does not have an AOC.

The other species at risk listed are understood to occur in the general area (e.g. Blanding's turtle, hog-nosed snake, five-lined skink, Algonquin wolf, wood thrush, Eastern wood pee-wee). These species are addressed through coarse filter (landscape scale planning) and fine filter (Conditions on Regular Operations (CROs) and AOCs) aspects of the FMP. It is important to note that in many cases the relevant CRO and AOC prescriptions apply to specific habitat features, such as a den, nest, or hibernacula, rather than the general habitat. The data included in the report is not sufficient to support the application of AOCs or CROs.

If there are specific observation details (e.g. location, biological details, observation date) available, I can review the observations to determine their relevance to FMP development and implementation. Additionally, observations of species of conservation concern can be submitted to the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) at any time. Data collected and verified by NHIC is considered in the development and implementation of the FMP. Information on how to submit observations can be found at https://www.ontario.ca/page/report-rare-species-animals-and-plants.

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