

UPDATE: SUMMER 2023

CATCHACOMA FOREST CONSERVATION

BY: THE CATCHACOMA FOREST STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE (CFSC) AND ANCIENT FOREST EXPLORATION & RESEARCH (AFER)

WHAT IS THE CFSC?

We are a group of concerned citizens advocating to protect the rare 660-ha mature and old-growth hemlock forest on crown land north of Catchacoma Lake, east of 507 and adjacent to Kawartha Highlands Provincial Park. Protection status will exclude logging and manage the forest for ecological health.

Old forests have important conservation values: carbon storage, wildlife habitat, recreation, education, research and more. We've built the case for conserving Catchacoma Forest since 2019 with the help of scientific research produced by NGO Ancient Forest Exploration & Research (AFER).



NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Amazing AFER researchers Jesse Mihevc and Lia Robles-Gil have returned for a second season surveying the wide diversity of life in Catchacoma Forest. To date they have documented 623 species, including 14 species at risk! Recent exciting discoveries include a wildlife cam capture of what is likely an Algonquin wolf--a threatened species in the province and known to occur in the area.

(Photo above)



375 YEAR OLD EASTERN HEMLOCK TREE

Jesse and Lia also report that the Catchacoma Forest wetland complex supports Blanding's, painted and snapping turtles. Other species at risk include black ash,, Canada warbler, eastern wood pee-wee, eastern ribbon snake, five-lined skink, hog-nosed snake, rusty blackbird, wood thrush and pink dimple lichen.



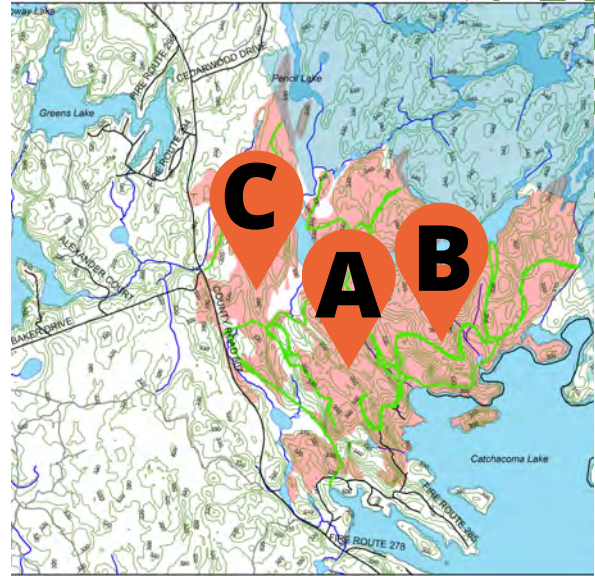
Blanding's turtle-Photo credit: Lia Robles-Gil

CATCHACOMA FOREST YOUTH

The 2022-23 highschool class in Peterborough's Youth Leadership in Sustainability program led by CFSC member and teacher extraordinaire Cam Douglas spent many hours in Catchacoma Forest learning forest research techniques, camping and forest bathing amongst the old trees.



Catchacoma Forest



A = Area logged 2019/20

B = Area in contingency

C = Area in contingency

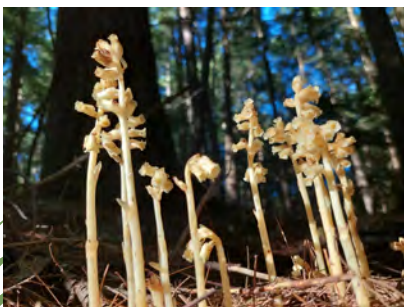
CFSC AT WORK

Since 2020 we've held over 20 public hikes and worked with AFER to continue ecological studies in Catchacoma, employ field researchers and set up a research station. We have presented the case for conservation to the Municipality of Trent Lakes and the mayor of Peterborough among many other groups and starred in the documentary "Conserving Catchacoma".

Read all the Catchacoma Forest reports and more @ peterborougholdgrowth.ca

FIND OUT ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS

Join our email list to learn about future public hikes and our August Forest Explorer hikes for kids aged 8-12. Send an email to katie@wildernesscommittee.org



PROTECTION UPDATE

CFSC participated in the Forest Management Planning process to halt logging in Catchacoma Forest in 2021. The forest is safe for another year---but logging could resume without permanent protection.

In early 2023 Ontario's Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks denied CFSC's request to support protection for Catchacoma Forest without explanation or rationale, despite the submission of scientific reports documenting its many ecological values and letters of support from Trent Lakes, Catchacoma Cottagers Association and ministry biologists.

We continue to request a meeting with the Minister and MPP Dave Smith to be able to present our case to reconsider support.

HOW TO HELP

Help keep up the pressure on Minister David Piccini and MPP Dave Smith. Use the QR code to send an email in support of protection for Catchacoma Forest!