



Agricultural Land Protection Policy in Nova Scotia

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Overview

- Current policy tools
- Review of available information on agricultural land loss
- Policy issues currently being studied

Why is Agricultural Land valuable?

- World Bank predicts we need to increase global agricultural production by 70% to feed 9 billion people in 2050
- Studies indicate that global warming will cause extreme weather events risking food production
- International acquisition of farmland is becoming an emerging phenomenon as nations and corporations hedge against climate related issues
- Consumers are increasingly concerned about local food production and food quality

Where does NS stand?

Table 2. Provincial Legislative Frameworks: Overall Strength and Components

	Overall Strength	Agric. Zone	Agric. land commission	Provincial statement of interest	Provincial land use policy	Most direct statement	Required integration
QC	Very strong	✓	CPTAQ	LPTAA	<i>Orientations</i>	“secure a lasting territorial basis”	“to be consistent with”
BC (Zone 1)	Very strong	✓	ALC	ALC Act		“To preserve agric. land”	“must be consistent with”
ON (PPS+)	Very strong				PPS+	“Prime agric. areas shall be protected”	“shall be consistent with”
BC (Zone 2)	Very strong	✓	ALC	ALC Act		“To preserve agric. land”	“must be consistent with”
ON (PPS)	Strong				PPS	“Prime agric. areas shall be protected”	“shall be consistent with”
MN	Moderate			SPI	PLUP	“To protect agric. land”	“must be generally consistent with”
SK	Moderate			SPI		“optimizes the use of agric. land”	“shall be consistent with”
NL	Moderate	✓ (ADA)				“development shall not be carried out”	“if they are contrary to...”
NS	Moderate to Weak			SPI		“To protect agric. land”	“shall be reasonably consistent with”
AB	Weak				PLUP	“To contribute to... agric. industry”	“it is expected”
NB	Weak						“shall conform with”
PEI	Weak						“shall be consistent with”

Source: National research project, Agricultural Land Use Planning in Canada.

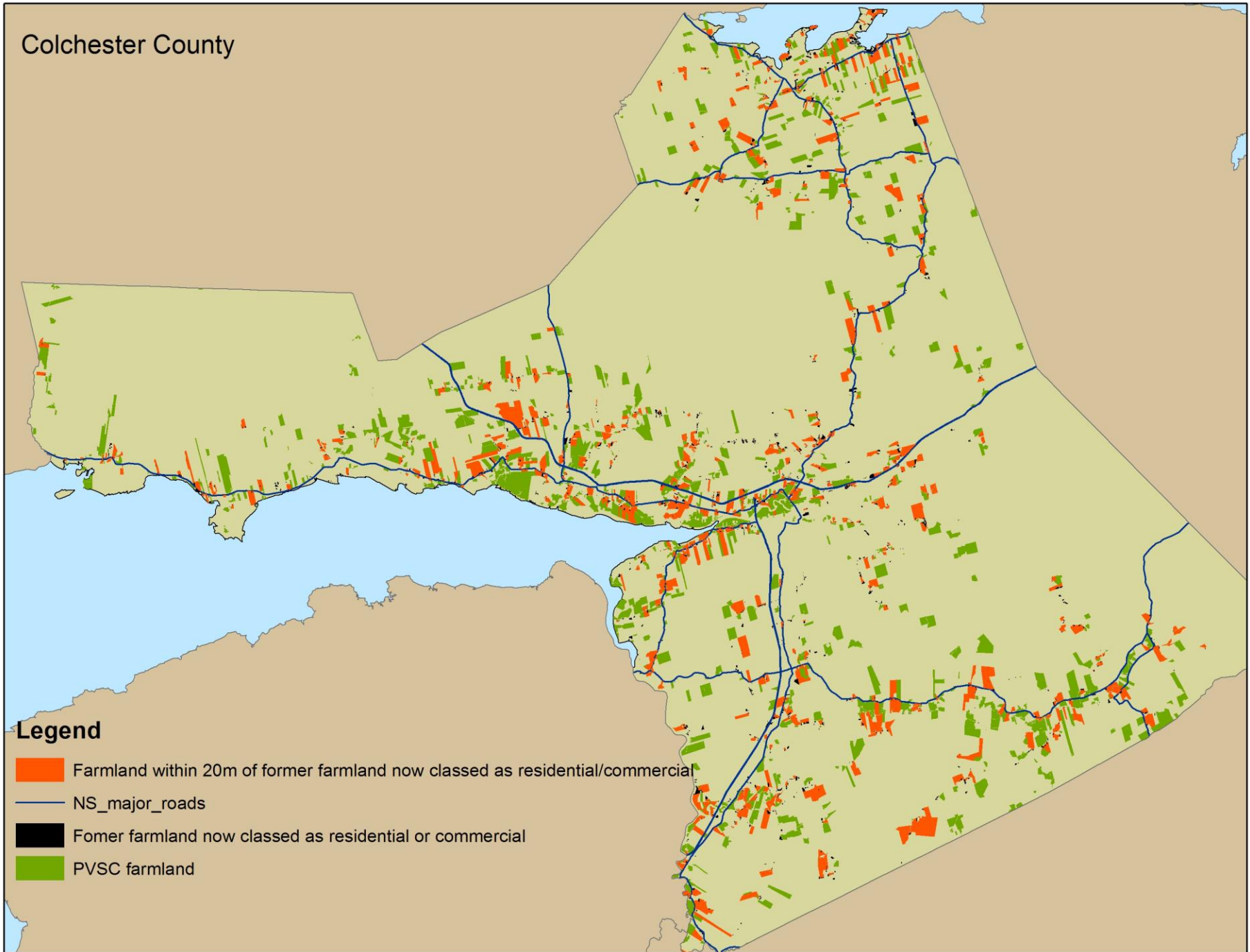
Current Policy Tools

- Statement of Provincial Interest (SPI) Regarding Agricultural Land
- Agricultural land tax exemption and change in use tax
- Community Easements Act – Allows agricultural conservation easements
- Agricultural Marshlands Conservation Act – Protects Dykeland
- Various Municipal policies





Data and findings

- Accurate and detailed information on agricultural land remains a key issue.
- Background analysis done using Property Valuation Services Corp (PVSC) data.
 - Determine area of land formerly classed as farmland (resource farm) and the new classification (e.g. taxable residential, taxable commercial, resource forest etc.)

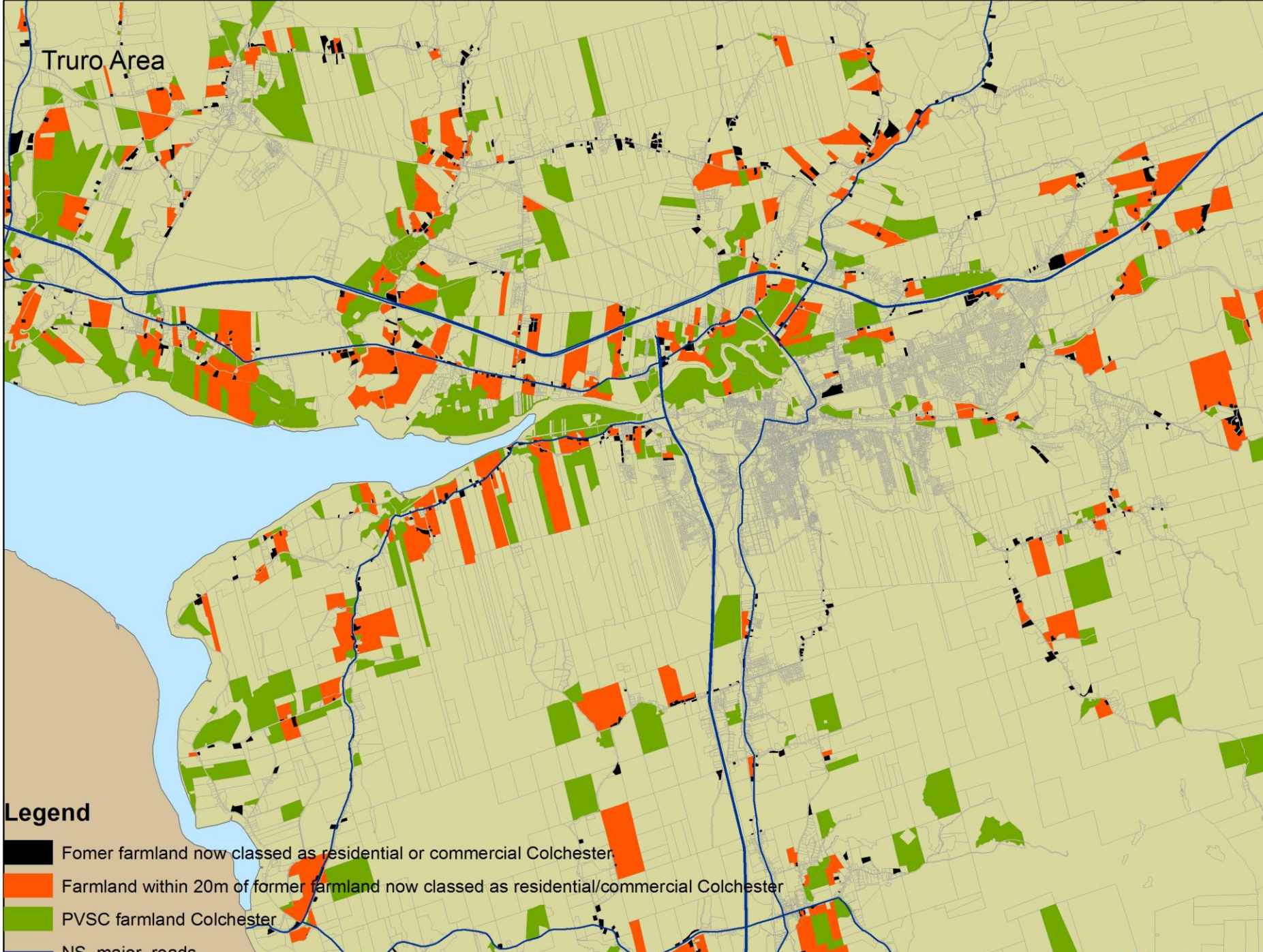
Colchester County



Legend

-  Farmland within 20m of former farmland now classed as residential/commercial
-  NS_major_roads
-  Fomer farmland now classed as residential or commercial
-  PVSC farmland

Truro Area



Legend

- Former farmland now classed as residential or commercial Colchester
- Farmland within 20m of former farmland now classed as residential/commercial Colchester
- PVSC farmland Colchester
- NS_major_roads

Data and findings (1978 to present)

- Former farm properties no longer classed as resource farm:
 - Properties “lost”=14,922
 - Area “lost”= 56,152 hectares (42% of 2011 Census crop area, 14% of total farm area)
- Former farm properties now classed as residential or commercial use:
 - Properties “lost”= 8,355
 - Area “lost”= 7,261 hectares (5% of 2011 Census crop area, 2% of total farm area)

Data and findings (1978 to present)

County (if more than 5k hectares of farmland)	Farmland (PVSC)	Former farmland “lost” to residential or commercial		Farmland next to “lost” farmland	
		Hectares	% of total	Hectares	% of total
Total (NS)	238,917	7,066	3%	53,500	22%
Colchester	34,038	1,581	5%	13,751	40%
Antigonish	14,003	744	5%	4,938	35%
Halifax	8,357	217	3%	2,247	27%
Hants	23,333	648	3%	5,486	24%
Pictou	18,479	736	4%	3,611	20%
Kings	34,052	821	2%	6,248	18%
Cumberland	44,403	624	1%	7,789	18%
Lunenburg	11,587	416	4%	1,858	16%
Inverness	14,136	371	3%	1,999	14%
Annapolis	15,980	306	2%	2,164	14%

Policy Ideas being reviewed

- Review of 60 recommendations/options from 3 reports
 - Williams Report (2010)
 - Policy Framework Document by Dept of Ag (2012)
 - Land Trusts Report (2016)
- Focus of the work is Legislative tools for protection of Agricultural Land

Policy Issues currently being studied

- Better Data – Need better tracking of loss of Ag Land
- Municipal or Provincial Responsibility – Planning
 - Strengthening of SPI
 - Additional Municipalities Adopting Planning Docs
 - Regional Planning (Provincial Land Use Framework)
- NS Land Trusts – Banking Land, Easements
- Tax Tools: Funding Initiatives with Change of Use Tax, and tightening tax exemption for only active (registered) farms

Questions?