

Verification Report

Fitzgerald Road Preservation Project

City Forest Credits Project Number 036

February 1, 2023

Zachary Boerman

182 Raleigh St

Rochester, NY 14620

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	3
1.1	PROJECT BACKGROUND	3
1.2	CONTACT INFORMATION	3
1.3	OBJECTIVE	3
2	VERIFICATION CRITERIA.....	4
2.1	GENERAL	4
2.2	PROTOCOL.....	4
2.3	LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	4
3	SCOPE OF VERIFICATION	4
4	VERIFICATION PROCESS.....	5
4.1	VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES	5
4.2	CFC TREE PRESERVATION PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS	5
4.2.1	Eligibility	5
4.2.2	Additionality.....	6
4.2.3	Permanence	7
4.2.4	Accounting	7
4.2.5	Leakage	8
5	VERIFICATION FINDINGS.....	9
6	VERIFICATION RESULTS AND CONCLUSION	9

1 INTRODUCTION

City Forest Credits engaged Zachary Boerman (a Validation and Verification Body (VVB) acting as a third-party verifier) to verify the Fitzgerald Road Preservation Project (Project), located in Rockford Township, Rockford, IL, for the reporting period November 11, 2022 through November 10, 2025. The goal of the verification is to ensure that the GHG assertion is materially correct, and that the assertions made by the project are well documented.

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Fitzgerald Road Preservation Project (the Project) is a 21.1-acre Project Area on a 42.28-acre property that is part of a larger complex of protected lands. Natural Land Institute (NLI) acquired the property in 2020 and has incorporated a preservation commitment to preserve the Project, protecting substantial conservation habitat and community benefits including carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat and open space protection. The surrounding land is facing a continued threat of urban expansion from the City of Rockford.

1.2 CONTACT INFORMATION

Project Operator

Natural Land Institute
320 South Third Street
Rockford, IL 61104
Contact: Kerry Leigh, Executive Director
kleigh@naturalland.org
815-964-6666

Verification Body

Zachary Boerman
182 Raleigh St
Rochester, NY 14620
zmboerma@gmail.com
+1 (585) 794-7584

1.3 OBJECTIVE

The goal of this GHG emission reduction verification is to ensure that the GHG assertion made by the Project is materially correct, that the assertions and assumptions used in the offset calculations are appropriate, that the offset calculations conform to the City Forest Credits (CFC) Protocol, and that the Project is in compliance with all CFC requirements relating to eligibility, accounting, and documentation.

2 VERIFICATION CRITERIA

2.1 GENERAL

The Registry will accredit VVBs to act as third-party verifiers who meet the Registry's qualifications and complete training. Those accredited VVBs can then act to verify compliance with this Tree Planting Protocol per International Standards Organization 14064-3. Specifically, the Registry adopts and utilizes the following standards from ISO 14064-3:

- Upon receiving a Project Design Document with data on eligibility, quantification of carbon and co-benefits, and a request for credits, the Registry will conduct a validation. If it validates the Project at that stage, the Registry will retain a VVB to act as third-party verifier to verify compliance with this Protocol.
- The Registry requires a reasonable level of assurance in the accuracy the asserted GHG removals to a reasonable level.
- The verification items identified in the Tables 1 and 2 are all material elements, and any asserted GHG removals must be free of errors, misstatements, or omissions regarding those elements.
- The Registry will record, store, and track all quantification and verification data and either display it for public review or make it available for public review upon request.

2.2 PROTOCOL

The verification was conducted to the City Forest Credits Tree Preservation Protocol, version 11.40, February 7, 2022.

2.3 LEVEL OF ASSURANCE

This verification was conducted to a reasonable level of assurance. The Verification Report accurately reflects the documentation contained in the Project Design Document and supporting documents.

3 SCOPE OF VERIFICATION

- The Project encompasses land within parcels 15-19-226-012 and 15-20-102-001 in Rockford Township, unincorporated City of Rockford, Winnebago County, Rockford, IL, specifically described in the Project Design Document.
- The Natural Land Institute purchased these parcels December 15, 2020 and within the declaration of development restrictions, have agreed not to destroy, or remove trees located on the property, except as necessary to control or prevent hazard, disease or fire or to improve forest health.

- The Project avoids emission of CO₂ from trees and soil, by avoiding conversion of forest to non-forest land cover and avoiding conversion of forest soil to impervious surface.
- The Project duration is 40 years, beginning November 11, 2022. The Project Operator commits to protecting the trees within the Project Area and monitoring the project carbon stocks for the entire Project duration.
- The verification includes a review of supporting documents, data, imagery and other evidence provided by the Project Operator; independent checking of selected data; independent review of ownership records, tax maps, and municipal zoning ordinances; analysis of inventory and plot sampling data and i-Tree Eco-based carbon stock calculations as well as checking of calculations for accuracy and conformance with the Protocol. All forest carbon input values were independently checked and calculations were independently replicated.

4 VERIFICATION PROCESS

4.1 VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES

The verification process consisted of the following activities:

- Verifier checked all requirements in the Protocol (outlined in 4.2), confirmed that documentation satisfies the requirements of the Protocol, and that values extracted from the documents and conclusions drawn from the documents are accurate and appropriate.
- Verifier independently checked mapping and calculated values in each stage of calculations.
- Verifier reviewed the credit calculations. Verifier reviewed the Project Operator's assertion that the Project results in GHG emissions mitigation of 3,230 tons CO₂e
- Verifier submitted a request for clarification to the Project Operator pertaining to parcel zoning designations, adherence to protocol sections determining threat of loss, and avoided impervious surface calculations. The Project Operator made the necessary changes to each and provided an updated Carbon Quantification workbook and Project Design Document.

4.2 CITY FOREST CREDITS TREE PRESERVATION PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS

4.2.1 Eligibility

Verifier reviewed the Project against all CFC Tree Preservation Protocol requirements and confirmed the following:

- Project Operator Identity (Section 1.1): Verifier confirmed the identity of the Project Operator by visiting naturalland.org as well as reviewing their Land Trust Alliance accreditation. Verifier confirmed the Project Operator is the landowner by reviewing Project parcel deeds.

- Project Documentation (Section 3): Verifier reviewed and confirmed Project Documentation including Project Design Document is complete and accurate.
- Project Implementation Agreement (Section 1.2): Verifier reviewed and confirmed fully executed Project Implementation Agreement on file.
- Project Location (Section 1.3): Verifier reviewed mapping and location data. Verifier confirmed that the Project Area falls within the Region 1 Planning Council (R1PC) Service Area. R1PC is designated as a Metropolitan Planning Agency and therefore satisfies the requirements of Protocol 1.3 D.
- Defining the Project Area (Section 1.4): Verifier confirmed the Project Area meets the canopy cover requirements with a total cover of 91%.
- Land Ownership or Right to Receive Credits (Section 1.5): Verifier confirmed that there is a clear title to carbon credits and the Project Operator has legal authority to create and dispose of greenhouse gas offsets generated on the project lands.
- Demonstrating Preservation and Threat of Loss (Section 4):
 - Verifier confirmed that trees within the Project Area were not protected from removal prior to the Project. Previously, trees in the Project Area were subject to Agricultural Priority (AG) zoning that allowed at least one non-forest use, including farming.
 - Verifier confirmed that trees within the Project Area are now preserved from removal by a recorded declaration of development restrictions signed November 11, 2022 and filed November 14, 2022.
 - The Project Operator has committed to meeting the permanence requirements.
 - Prior to the Preservation Commitment action by the Project Operator, there was threat of conversion of the Project lands to non-forest cover. Protocol Section 4.4 A was met and the Verifier confirmed that 66.5% of the perimeter is adjacent to developed use.
- No Double Counting and No Net Harm (Section 5): Verifier confirmed that Attestation of No Double Counting and No Net Harm is on file.

4.2.2 Additionality

Verifier reviewed and confirmed that Project lands met the additionality requirements of the Protocol:

- Prior to the Project, lands were not protected from conversion by easement, zoning, or other legal mechanism.
- Verifier confirmed that Winnebago County, IL zoning ordinance AG allows for development that includes the removal of existing trees.
- The trees in the Project Area face some risk of removal or conversion out of forest as evidenced by over 30% of the perimeter adjacent to developed use.

- Project Operator signed an Attestation of Additionality.

4.2.3 Permanence

The Project Operator has committed to CFC that the Project Operator will protect the trees on the Project Area for 40 years. The recorded declaration of development restrictions protecting the Project Trees and lands are permanent.

4.2.4 Accounting

The Project documents an on-site plot sample forest inventory, and uses required factors in carbon stock and offset calculations.

The Project Operator elected to quantify the stored carbon stock as outlined in the CFC Protocol Section 11.1 B. To meet these requirements, the Project Operator contracted Davey Resource Group (DRG) to provide on-site plot-sample inventory. DRG conducted a sample forest assessment adhering to the standards set form in CFC Tree Preservation Protocol Section 11.1.B. The sample established 21 sample plots sized at 1/10th-acre. Within every plot, each live tree at least 5” in diameter at 4.5’ above the ground where the height above the ground is measured on the uphill side of the tree was inventoried. Species, diameter, and overall tree condition were recorded for each tree. Verifier confirmed this sampling design achieved a standard error of 10%.

The Verifier confirmed that all 21-sample plots fell within the outlined 21.1 acres of the Project Area via the supplied primary and secondary plot location map supplied by the Project Operator.

The Verifier confirmed that the tC/ac of biomass calculated by the Project Operator is correct. This number was verified by repeating the calculation ($\text{biomass tC/ac} = (\text{metric tons of carbon} - \text{standard error}) / \text{Project Area acre}$) where metric tons of carbon and standard error were supplied by the Project Operators i-Tree Eco carbon biomass results. tCO₂e/ac was then verified by dividing tC/ac by the ratio of the molecular weight of carbon dioxide to that of carbon (44/12). The Verifier confirmed that the measurement of 163.09 tCO₂e/ac is correct for the Project Area using this method.

Following the Protocol outlined in 11.2 A, the Verifier confirmed that based on its agricultural zoning, 90% of the Accounting Stock on the Project Area can be claimed as avoided biomass emissions.

The Project Operator elected to follow Protocol Section 11.4 A to claim avoidance of emissions from soil carbon caused by conversion of soils to impervious surfaces in the Project Area. The zoning ordinance provided by the Project Operator indicates that maximum impervious surface area for AG zoning is 60%. The Verifier agrees that 60% of the area (13 acres) can be claimed as avoided impervious surface.

The Verifier confirmed that with 13 acres of avoided impervious surface in the Project Area, and the stipulation in section 11.4 of the Protocol that allows the Project to claim 120 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent of avoided soil carbon emissions per acre of net avoided impervious surface, the Project accounts for 1,519 tCO₂e of avoided soil carbon emissions.

4.2.5 Leakage

Offset accounting makes deductions for expected displacement of emissions following the requirements of the Protocol.

The Verifier confirmed that the Project Operator accurately followed Protocol section 11.5 A to determine that, of the total number of tonnes of avoided biomass emissions from within the Project Area, 18.3% are assumed to be emitted from development displaced from the Project Area. After repeating the calculations to remove the Displaced Biomass Emissions from the total Avoided Biomass Emissions, the Verifier confirmed the total Credits from Avoided Biomass Emissions (2,530 tCO₂e) is correct.

The Verifier confirmed that the Project Operator accurately followed Protocol Section 11.5 B to determine that, of the total number of tonnes of Avoided Soil Carbon Emissions from within the Project Area, 30.3% are assumed to be emitted from development displaced from the Project Area. After repeating the calculations to remove the Displaced Soil Emissions from the total Avoided Soil Carbon Emissions, the Verifier confirmed the total Credits from Avoided Soil Emissions (1,059 tCO₂e) is correct.

5 VERIFICATION FINDINGS

All issues raised by Verifier were clarified or corrected by the Project Operator and all issues were closed by appropriate responses by the Natural Land Institute.

The Project documents and data were reviewed, and the Verifier found that the emission reductions claimed are reasonable and in accordance with the Preservation Protocol. The Verifier makes no further recommendations.

6 VERIFICATION RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

This verification of the Fitzgerald Road Preservation Project for the reporting period November 11, 2022 through November 10, 2025 was completed in a manner consistent with ISO 14064-3 and in conformance with relevant CFC standards and guidelines. The table below is a summary of the emission reduction or removals.

Table 1. Project GHG Removals

Project Name	GHG Reductions and Removals Attributed to the Project (mtCO₂e)	Reversal Pool Account (10%) (mtCO₂e)	Emission Reductions to be Issued to Project (mtCO₂e)
Fitzgerald Road Preservation Project	3,589	359	3,230
Cumulative	3,589	359	3,230

The Project Operator calculated ecosystem co-benefits using the CFC tool to determine dollar values of other ecosystem services. The Verifier corroborated the CFC tool inputs and outputs to produce the values below. The Verifier does not make an assessment to the plausibility of these values.

Table 2. Ecosystem Co-Benefits Per Year

<i>Ecosystem Services</i>	<i>Resource Units</i>	<i>Value</i>
Rainfall Interception (m3/yr)	5,220.80	\$37,380.32
Air Quality (t/yr)	0.2185	\$329.00
Cooling – Electricity (kWh/yr)	41,098	\$3,119.34
Heating – Natural Gas (kBtu/yr)	768,462	\$7,480.81
Grand Total (\$/yr)		\$48,309.48

Because the Project Area is less than 50 acres, all credits are issued in the first year.

Verifier Signature



Zachary Boerman