

Verification Report

Hambden Hills Forest Preservation Project

City Forest Credits Project Number 068

January 28, 2026

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1 INTRODUCTION

City Forest Credits engaged Zachary Boerman (a Validation and Verification Body (VVB) acting as a third-party verifier) to verify the Hambden Hills Forest Preservation Project (Project), Hambden Township, OH, for the reporting period November 7, 2025 through November 6, 2028. 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 project area includes 55.38 acres of a larger preservation project of 182.51 acres in Hambden Township, Geauga County, Ohio.

The Property is located within the Paine Creek watershed and contains 7,350 feet of Bates Creek, with the upland forested section serving as critical riparian buffer. Hambden Hills is owned by Geauga Park District, acquired in September 2023, with the intent of turning the 182.51-acre property into a park. There is potential for trails to be built and for the property to eventually be open to the public, so that the surrounding community has increased access to green space. The projects forest stands are a mix of red and sugar maple, bitternut hickory, and black cherry trees. The land is zoned for residential use, so the preservation of trees on this property is critical to prevent forest clearing for development.

The Project Operator, Western Reserve Land Conservancy, is partnering with the landowner, Geauga Park District, to preserve 55.38 acres of threatened forest to protect wildlife habitat and provide carbon sequestration. The Project will contribute to the greater goal of preserving mature trees with a long-term investment in their future. The ability to sequester carbon within mature forests makes carbon crediting a valuable tool for a project such as Hambden Hills.

Originally zoned for residential land use, the carbon crediting of this project will legally protect the trees so that no tree harvest is allowed. The current deed restriction has been amended to reflect this new level of protection, strengthening the preservation commitment of the project. There will also be annual monitoring to maintain the property and health of the trees, securing the carbon within the ecosystem and providing critical wildlife habitat for native species including several endangered bat species. This carbon credit project maximizes the intrinsic value of the property for the benefit of the surrounding ecosystem.

1.2 CONTACT INFORMATION

Project Operator

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Verification Body

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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 Preservation 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 13.40, February 29, 2024.

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 in Hambden Township, OH. The Project is comprised of portions of parcels 15-045300 and 15-045400 specifically described in the Project Design Document.
- The Project area was acquired by the Geauga Park District, a partner in the Hambden Hills Preservation Project, in September 2023. Section 1 subsection 1 of the associated Declaration of Restrictions outlines, “Improvements made to the property will first be approved by the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) and will have no more than a negligible or de minimus impact on biomass and carbon stock.”
- 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 7 2025. 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 5,939 tons CO₂e

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 Project Operator's identity by visiting their website www.wrlandconservancy.org. Verifier further confirmed the identity by reviewing the organizations 501(c)(3) tax exempt status letter including in the Project documents.
- 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 signed May 15, 2025 is on file.
- Project Location (Section 1.3): Verifier reviewed the provided maps and shapefiles and confirmed that the Project area falls within the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA). The NOACA is a metropolitan planning agency, which satisfies section 1.3 D of the Protocol.
- Defining the Project Area (Section 1.4): Verifier confirmed that 80% of the Project Area is covered by tree canopy after reviewing the provided Forest Composition Report and i-Tree Eco Raw Inventory Data. This satisfies Protocol section 1.4 C that states the Project Area must have at least 80% canopy cover in locations that receive 20" of precipitation per year.
- 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. More than 30% of the Project Area's perimeter is adjacent to zoning districts that allow for non-forest uses including, but not limited to, residential development.

- o Verifier confirmed that trees within the Project Area are now preserved from removal by a recorded Declaration of Restrictions
 - o The Project Operator has committed to meeting the permanence requirements
 - o Prior to the Preservation Commitment action by the Project Operator there was threat of conversion of the project lands to non-forest cover as evidenced by 44% of the Project area perimeter being adjacent to developed or improved uses.
- No Double Counting and No Net Harm (Section 5):
 - o Verifier confirmed that Attestation of No Double Counting and No Net Harm is on file and signed August 29, 2025.
 - o Verifier compared the Project geospatial data to the registered urban forest carbon preservation projects geospatial database using ArcMap and determined that there is no overlap between Hambden Hills and any existing registered urban forest carbon preservation projects.
 - Monitoring and Reporting (Section 8): Verifier confirmed that Project Operator has a plan for monitoring and reporting over the Project Duration, and the plan is plausible and reasonable.

4.2.2 Additionality

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

- Prior to the Preservation Commitment, lands were not protected from conversion by easement, zoning, or other legal mechanism. Relevant critical areas were excluded from the Project Area.
- Prior to the Preservation Commitment, the R-1 residential zoning regulations that applied to the Project area allowed for development that included the removal of existing trees.
- Prior to the Preservation Commitment, the trees in the Project Area passed one of three tests to show risk of removal or conversion out of forest, demonstrated by 44% of the Project lands being adjacent to developed uses. This surpasses the 30% threshold outlined in Protocol Section 4.4 A.
- Project Operator signed an Attestation of Additionality on August 29, 2025 that includes information on the impact of carbon revenues to project success.
- The Project is not common practice, demonstrated by the current version of the Registry's Activity Penetration Analysis – Demonstration of Additionality of Urban Forest Preservation.
- Verifier confirmed that the landowner is not a land conservation entity and therefore the Project lands acquisition date does not need to fall within two years of the date of Project application.

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 Declaration of Restrictions protecting the Project Trees and lands is permanent.

4.2.4 Accounting

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

The Project Operator elected to quantify the stored carbon stock in compliance with CFC Protocol Section 11.1 B. To meet these requirements, the Project Operator established 20 - 1/10th acre plots. Within every plot, each live tree was inventoried that was at least 5" in diameter. Species, diameter at breast height, and crown condition were recorded for each tree in addition to plot specific canopy cover. The Verifier confirmed the above sampling method resulted in a standard error of 12.9%.

The Verifier confirmed that all 20-sample plots fell within the 55.38 acre Project Area via the provided Plot Location map.

The Verifier confirmed that the tC/ac of biomass calculated by the Project Operator is correct. This number was verified by repeating the calculation (biomass tC/ac = (metric tons of carbon—standard error)/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 197.96 tCO₂e/ac is correct for the Project area using this method.

The Verifier confirmed that 68.5% of the accounting stock is at risk of tree removal. The Geauga County R-1 zoning regulations stipulate that the minimum residential lot size is 3 acre, which allows for 18 potential units. 90% of the accounting stock, or 9,866.70 tCO₂e, is more than the avoided biomass emissions resulting from the calculation accounting for 18 dwellings on 55.38 acres $11,227 * (((2 * 18) + ((55.38 - (2 * 18)) * 0.1)) / 55.38) = 7,691.04$ tCO₂e. Therefore, in accordance with Protocol Section 11.2 B, 7,509.80 tCO₂e, or 68.5%, of the accounting stock is at risk of tree removal.

The Verifier confirmed that the R-1 zoning regulations stipulate a maximum lot coverage of 10%. In accordance with Protocol Section 11.1, because the applicable residential zoning rules specify a maximum fraction of the parcel that may be in impervious surface, 10% of the impervious area may be claimed as avoided conversion to impervious surface. This results in 5.54 acres of avoided impervious surface.

The Verifier also confirmed that with 6 acres of avoided impervious surface in the Project area, the Project accounts for 665 tCO₂e of avoided soil carbon emissions. This calculation was made in line with section 11.3 of the Protocol, which allows the Project to claim 120 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent of avoided soil carbon emissions per acre of net avoided impervious surface.

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 11.4 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 (6,136 tCO₂e) is correct.

The Verifier also confirmed that the Project Operator accurately followed Protocol Section 11.4 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 (463 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 Western Reserve Land Conservancy.

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 Hambden Hills Preservation Project for the reporting period November 7, 2025 through November 6 2028 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	Issuance Year	GHG Reductions and Removals Attributed to the Project (mtCO₂e)	Reversal Pool Account (10%) (mtCO₂e)	Emission Reductions to be Issued to Project (mtCO₂e)
Hambden Hills Forest Preservation Project	2026 (after validation)	5,958	596	5,362
Hambden Hills Forest Preservation Project	2027	641	64	577
Cumulative		6,599	660	5,939

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 (m ³ /yr)	22,659.1	\$47,892.46
Air Quality (t/yr)	1.5633	\$3,853.78
Cooling – Electricity (kWh/yr)	68,804	\$9,639.50
Heating – Natural Gas (kBtu/yr)	2,848,151	\$39,835.07
Grand Total (\$/yr)		\$101,220.81

Because the Project area is greater than 50 acres, credits will be issued attributable to the equivalent of 50 acres of the Project area annually until all credits have been issued.

Verifier Signature



Zachary Boerman