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**Rainforest
Alliance**

SmartWood Program

Forest Management
Certification Reassessment
Report for:

Nova Scotia Landowners and
Forest Fibre Producers
Association
In
Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia,
Canada

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of an independent certification assessment conducted by a team of specialists representing the SmartWood Program of the Rainforest Alliance. The purpose of the re-assessment was to evaluate the ecological, economic and social performance of the Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers Association (NSLFFPA) as defined by the Forest Stewardship Council.

This report contains four main sections of information and findings and several appendixes. The whole report plus appendix I will become public information about the forest management operation that may be distributed by SmartWood or the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) to interested parties. The remainder of the appendixes are confidential, to be reviewed only by authorized SmartWood and FSC staff and reviewers bound by confidentiality agreements.

The purpose of the SmartWood program is to recognize conscientious land stewardship through independent evaluation and certification of forestry practices. Forestry operations that attain SmartWood certification may use the SmartWood and FSC labels for public marketing and advertising.

1. SCOPE OF THE CERTIFICATE

1.1. Scope of the certificate

The Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers Association (NSLFFPA) manages 131 properties (89 ownerships) as a SLIMF resource manager. NSLFFPA extends its certification program to woodlot owners within 250 kilometers of the NewPage mill in Port Hawkesbury in the counties of Cape Breton, Richmond, Victoria, Inverness, Guysborough, Antigonish and Pictou. NSLFFPA is a not-for-profit association financed from a levy paid by members and non-members who sell pulpwood under a Collective Agreement to NewPage Port Hawkesbury.

Woodlot owners who are members of NSLFFPA are provided with a management plan and inclusion within NSLFFPA at no cost with the assistance of a provincial grant.

1.2. Exclusion of areas from the scope of certificate

| X | Applicability of FSC partial certification and excision policy | | |
|--|---|------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | All forest land owned or managed by the FME is included in the scope of this evaluation. | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | FME owns and/or has management involvement in other forest land/properties (forest management units) not being evaluated. If yes, complete all sections below. | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Is any portion of the forest management unit (s) under evaluation for certification being excised from the scope of the evaluation? If yes, complete all sections below. | | |
| Comments / Explanation for exclusion/excision: | | | |
| Control measures to prevent contamination | | | |
| Other Forest area | Location | Size (ha) | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

2. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

2.1. Certification Standard Used

| | |
|--|--|
| Forest Stewardship standard Used for assessment: | Certification Standards for Best Forestry Practices in the Maritimes Region – FSC-STD-CAN-Maritimes-SLIMF-2008 - Standard for Small and Low Intensity Forests. January 2008. |
| Local Adaptation: (if applicable) | |

2.2. Assessment team and qualifications

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|--------------|---|
| Auditor Name | Bruce Byford R.P.F. | Auditor role | Lead Auditor Forestry & Ecology |
| Qualifications: | Bruce Byford is a Licensed Professional Forester (Ontario) and President of Arbex Forest Resource Consultants Ltd. He has 30 years experience as a consulting forester. Bruce has been Lead Auditor on fifteen Independent Forest Audits in Ontario. As a consultant to SmartWood he has participated as a Lead Auditor, Forest Management and/or First Nations/Socioeconomic assessor on multiple assessments in Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Quebec. He has completed ISO 14001 Lead Auditor Training and completed the Forest Assessor Training delivered by SmartWood. | | |
| Auditor Name | Tom Beckley Ph.D. | Auditor role | First Nations and Socio-economic Assessor |
| Qualifications: | Tom is a professor in the Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton. He has a PhD in Sociology, a MSc. in Rural Sociology and an A.B. in Anthropology and Environmental Studies. Tom teaches human dimensions of natural resource use (including policy and certification) to both graduates and undergraduates. He was a member of the Boreal Coordinating Committee that assembled the FSC Boreal Standard. He has been a member of three previous FSC assessments and two pre-assessments, and has also done peer review work for SmartWood. His own research focuses on public involvement in forest management and planning, alternative tenure arrangements in forestry, non-timber forest products, property rights, social sustainability, and the sociology of timber dependent communities. | | |

2.3. Assessment schedule (including pre-assessment and stakeholder consultation)

| Date | Location /main sites | Main activities |
|---------------|---|---|
| May 2010 | Consultant Offices | Preliminary document review |
| June 20, 2010 | New Glasgow | Face-to-face interview with FSC woodlot owner (Nagaya Pool) and staff member of the Ecology Action Centre |
| June 21, 2010 | NSLFFPA Office Port Hawkesbury John Mansley Property | Interviews and record review field site inspection |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| | Jeff Lee Property | |
| June 22, 2010 | Ken MacRury Property Sandy MacLeod Property | Field site inspections |
| June 23, 2010 | George Post Property | Field site inspection |
| June 24, 2010 | NSLFFPA Office | Interviews and record review |
| June 25, 2010 | NSLFFPA Office | Interviews and exit meeting |
| July 15, 2010 | Consultant offices | Follow-up interviews with First Nations representative |
| July 30, 2010 | Consultant offices | Follow-up phone calls with woodlot owners |
| July 31, 2010 | Consultant offices | Follow-up email survey with selected woodlot owners |
| August 1 – October 12, 2010 | SmartWood offices | Draft reviewed and edited by SmartWood and audit team |
| October 15, 2010 | SmartWood offices | First draft delivered to NSLFFPA |
| November 5, 2010 | SmartWood offices | Report finalized |

Total number of person days used for the assessment: 21.5
= number of auditors participating X number of days spent in preparation, on site and post site visit follow-up including stakeholder consultation.

2.4. Evaluation strategy

This re-assessment followed closely an annual audit completed in March 2010. With the economic downturn very few landowners have been harvesting on their properties so a focus of this re-assessment was to visit a sample of landowners in proximity to Port Hawkesbury who had conducted harvesting or other silvicultural operations on their holdings during 2009-2010.

During the past year there has been a rapid expansion in the membership of NSLFFPA from five members to over eighty members. This expansion in membership is attributable to the availability of grant money for the preparation of forest management plans at no cost for Association members. A goal of the assessment was to determine the degree to which new members understood FSC principles and the requirements of the Maritime Standard. Additionally, a focus of the field work was to ascertain the capacity of NSLFFPA to administer and monitor certification services in light of the rapid expansion of its membership.

Field work for the re-assessment was conducted over the period of June 21-25th. A total of five properties were visited. All properties had harvesting to salvage timber damaged by bark beetles. A selection harvest of sugar maple was also inspected on one property. Other forest management activities inspected included tree planting, pre-commercial thinning, tending and road and water crossing construction.

A review of the management plans, the NSLFFPA Policies and Procedures Manual and other relevant documentation and records was undertaken. Interviews were conducted with NSLFFPA program foresters, landowners whose properties were selected for site inspection, other Association members, a forest management planning consultant, a logging contractor, and a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Private Lands Forester.

List of management aspects reviewed by assessment team:

| Type of site | Sites Visited | Type of site | Sites visited |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Road construction | X | Illegal settlement | |
| Soil drainage | | Bridges/stream crossing | x |
| Workshop | | Chemical storage | |
| Tree nursery | | Wetland | |
| Planned Harvest site | | Steep slope/erosion | |
| Ongoing Harvest site | | Riparian zone | x |
| Completed logging | X | Planting | x |
| Soil scarification | | Direct seeding | |
| Planting site | X | Weed control | |
| Felling by harvester | X | Natural regeneration | |
| Felling by forest worker | X | Endangered species | |
| Skidding/Forwarding | X | Wildlife management | |
| Clearfelling/Clearcut | | Nature Reserve | |
| Shelterwood management | | Key Biotope | |
| Selective felling | X | Special management area | |
| Sanitation cutting | X | Historical site | |
| Pre-commercial thinning | X | Recreational site | |

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|-----------------|---|
| Commercial thinning | | Buffer zone | x |
| Logging camp | | Local community | |

2.5. Stakeholder consultation process

The purpose of the stakeholder consultation strategy for this assessment was threefold:

- 1) To ensure that the public was aware of and informed about the assessment process and its objectives;
- 2) To assist the field assessment team in identifying potential issues; and,
- 3) To provide diverse opportunities for the public to discuss and act upon the findings of the assessment.

The following methods were used to solicit stakeholder input in the assessment:

- 1) A web Notice of the Assessment on the SmartWood and FSC website.
- 2) An email notification sent to an internal list of interested national and international NGOs.
- 3) A mail survey and invitation to comment to individuals and organizations on the NSLFFPA stakeholder list.
- 4) Telephone contacts with identified stakeholders, property owners and local organizations.

Confidential comments were submitted by two individuals during this re-assessment. No other stakeholder issues were brought forward for review during this re-assessment process.

An observer from the Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute accompanied the assessors for two days during the field assessment.

| Stakeholder Type (NGO, government bodies, local inhabitant, contractor etc.) | Stakeholders Notified (#) | Stakeholders consulted directly or provided input (#) |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| National/International NGOs | 100 | 0 |
| Local/Regional NGOs | 200 | 2 |
| Local Community members | | 8 |
| Govt Agency | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 301 | 11 |

3. ASSESSMENT FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

3.1. Stakeholder comments received

The stakeholder consultation activities were organized to give participants the opportunity to provide comments according to general categories of interest based upon the re-assessment criteria. The table below summarizes the issues identified by the re-assessment team with a brief discussion of each based upon specific interview and/or public meeting comments.

| FSC Principle | Stakeholder comment | SmartWood response |
|---|--|---|
| P1: FSC Commitment and Legal Compliance | A concern was raised that members of NSLFFPA were not fully aware of the certification requirements. | Landowners are interviewed to determine their eligibility for inclusion in NSLFFPA, are provided with hard copy documentation on certification. All members sign a consent form indicating their agreement to abide by FSC Principles and the Standard. Interviews with a sample of members confirmed that they were aware of the requirements of the standard that were applicable. |
| P2: Tenure & Use Rights & Responsibilities | No comments were received. | None required. |
| P3 – Indigenous Peoples’ Rights | No comments were received. | None required. |
| P4: Community Relations & Workers’ Rights | No comments were received. | None required. |
| P5: Benefits from the Forest | A concern was raised with respect to the methodology adopted for the calculation of the AAC and whether or not overharvesting was occurring. | Actual volume removals are based on stand silvicultural prescriptions (prepared by a forester or forest technician) which indicate the proposed treatment and the permissible volume removal (i.e. 1/3 of the volume in a selection harvest). Area and volume removals for buffer zones or other special management zones are also deducted from the available harvest area or volume estimate. Harvest levels were determined to be set within a "justifiable growth period and growth area". Though the growth period is very narrowly set the audit team acknowledges that, across the group, the growth area is identified as the area containing merchantable timber, not the entire land base. Compliance with the forest management plan prescriptions |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | (which is monitored during site inspections) and a commitment to FSC principles and standards by all landowners in the membership pool should ensure the long term sustainability of the forests. |
| P6: Environmental Impact | A concern was raised with respect to implementation of management activities on some woodlots. | The field site visits did not reveal widespread negative impacts attributable to forestry operations. Some localized rutting was observed, however, measures were being implemented to correct the problem. |
| P7: Management Plan | No comments were received. | None required. |
| P8: Monitoring & Assessment | No comments were received. | None required. |
| P9: Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forest | No comments were received. | None required. |
| P10 - Plantations | No comments were received. | None required. |

3.2. Main strengths and weaknesses

| Principle | Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|--|--|
| P1: FSC Commitment and Legal Compliance | No identified contradictions between FSC principles and local, provincial or federal laws. | NSLFFPA does not currently conduct site inspections during active operations to ensure the conformance of landowners and/or contractors with the health and safety policies. CAR 02/10 is elevated to a Major. Procedures to protect against illegal harvesting are required (CAR 01/11). |
| P2: Tenure & Use Rights & Responsibilities | Customary uses are respected and dispute resolution mechanisms are in place. | No weaknesses identified. |
| P3 – Indigenous Peoples' Rights | The relationship with one band is strong and this could serve as a model for building relations with other First Nation communities. | There is not a system in place to ensure appropriate contact is made with First Nations people (CAR 02/11). |
| P4: Community Relations & Workers' Rights | Operations clearly benefit local communities. | There is no requirement in place that obliges FSC pool woodlot owners to notify adjacent landowners 30 days prior to the commencement of major operations (if such operations are within 30 meters of adjacent properties) (CAR 03/11). |
| P5: Benefits from the Forest | Landowners obtain a good price for their products and a broad diversity of products is produced. | No weaknesses identified. |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| P6: Environmental Impact | The relatively small scale of woodlot operations negates the potential for detrimental landscape level impacts. Landowners interviewed demonstrated a strong environmental ethic. | NSLFFPA has not fully fulfilled the requirement to collect and maintain information on the range of natural variability for use in the forest management planning process (CAR 04/11). While an integrated pest management program is in place, information on the program and program activities have not been included in a Public Summary (CAR 05/11). |
| P7: Management Plan | Management plans promote the restoration of the Acadian Forest through the application of appropriate silvicultural strategies. Plans reflect local site conditions. | Forest management plan objectives tend to be general without identified targets or timelines for objective achievement, nor have strategies for objective achievement been articulated (CAR 06/11). Reduction factors to account for the predictable influence of pests and diseases have not been applied in the calculation of the annual allowable cut (CAR 07/11). |
| P8: Monitoring & Assessment | A monitoring program is in place. | Data or information on forest growth is not collected (CAR 08/11). A summary of the monitoring program and its activities has not been compiled (CAR 09/11). |
| P9: Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forest | Special management areas have been identified. Management of identified sites is in accordance with management plan objectives. | Public summary documents must fully comply with the requirements of the standard (CAR10/11). |
| P10 - Plantations | No conversion of certified forest land to plantations is occurring. The goal of NSLFFPA is the restoration of the Acadian Forest where existing plantations are managed for a diversity of species and natural stand attributes. | Several properties within the certified pool have areas of plantations in excess of the 10% permitted by the standard (CAR 11/11). |
| Chain of custody | Adequate COC procedures are in place and records are maintained. | No weakness identified. |
| Group Certification Requirements | Group certification requirements were largely met. | The Group entity procedures do not specify the maximum number of members that can be supported by the management system and the human and technical capacities of the Group entity (CAR 12/11). |

3.3. Conformance with corrective actions

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--|
| CAR 01/10 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 10.1 |
| Non-conformance | | To date, plantations have not been considered within the scope of the certificate; however some of the new properties added to the group show characteristics of plantations. NSLFFPA has not stratified the new properties by forest type so as to determine whether plantations (as defined by the FSC Maritimes Standards) are present and are being managed accordingly this results in a major non-conformance and the issuance of Major CAR 01/10. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall stratify by forest type new properties added to the group to determine whether there are plantations present as defined by the SLIMF FSC Maritime Standards. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Within 3 months of receiving report |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | Properties in the certified pool are stratified in a "Forest Area Breakdown" spreadsheet created by NSLFFPA that provides area of each property by forest type. The re-assessment team visited several areas that had been stratified to forest types other than plantations and agreed with the stand description utilized in the management plan. This meets the conditions of this CAR and therefore this CAR is closed. |
| CAR Status: | | Closed |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | None required. |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| CAR 02/10 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 4.2.2 |
| Non-conformance | | Many landowners conduct their own harvesting operations and it is uncertain that landowners comply with Provincial health and safety requirements and are knowledgeable of regulations. The NSLFFPA does not have a worker safety program. It is unclear as to whether forest management meets applicable laws covering health and safety and the absence of a worker safety program results in a non conformance and CAR 02/10 is issued. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA is responsible for ensuring that group members meet health and safety requirements. NSLFFPA shall develop a health and safety program for group members and shall ensure that members meet requirements. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Prior to the next annual audit. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | NSLFFPA has addressed worker safety issues in a new "harvest monitoring checklist", but this document and how and when it is to be applied) is not referenced in NSLFFPA policies and procedures manual. Currently, on-site inspections during harvest and other silvicultural activities are not conducted. This lack of inspection makes it impossible to determine if health and safety regulations are being followed. This CAR remains open and is elevated to Major. |
| CAR Status: | | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | CAR is elevated to a Major which must be closed prior to re-certification. Major CAR 02/10: NSLFFPA is responsible for ensuring that group members meet health and safety requirements. NSLFFPA shall develop a health and safety program for group members and shall |

| | |
|--|--|
| | ensure that members meet requirements. |
|--|--|

| | | |
|--|----------------|---|
| CAR 03/10 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 5.6.2 |
| Non-conformance | | Recommended volumes for harvesting are identified in individual management plans as per the discretion of the plan writer. Plans do not provide long-term forecasting, nor is growth and yield data used. There is no methodology that describes how the rate of harvest will be permanently sustained, and to this end this is a non-conformance and CAR 03/10 has been issued. |
| Major | Minor X | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall provide justification as to how the current approach for determining the ACC will ensure that the rate of harvest of forest products will not exceed levels that can be permanently sustained. A methodology shall be developed justifying the approach. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Prior to next annual audit |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | Appendix 6 of the management plans provides a methodology for the calculation of a sustainable yield. The methodology indicates that the harvest levels are based on yield information from the provincial inventory which provides stand volumes for stand types at various stand ages (incorporates growth in the volume projection). Actual volume removals are based on stand silvicultural prescriptions (prepared by a forester or forest technician) which indicate the proposed treatment and the permissible volume removal (i.e. 1/3 of the volume in a selection harvest). Area and volume removals for buffer zones or other special management zones are also deducted from the available harvest area or volume estimate. Harvest levels were determined to be set within a "justifiable growth period and growth area". Though the growth period is very narrowly set the audit team acknowledges that, across the group, the growth area is recognized solely as the area containing merchantable timber. Interviews with DNR staff and a forestry consultant indicated that the methodology adopted by NSLFFPA is appropriate for the size of properties and scale of operations on private land. Compliance with the forest management plan prescriptions (which is monitored during site inspections) and a commitment to FSC principles and standards by all landowners in the membership pool should ensure the long term sustainability of the forests. The audit teams finds, given the methodology provided by NSLFFPA, that this meets indicator 5.6.2 and therefore this CAR is closed. |
| CAR Status: | | Closed |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | None required. |

| | | |
|---|----------------|--|
| CAR 04/10 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 8.1.1 |
| Non-conformance | | While pre and post-harvest inspections are conducted by NSLFFPA monitoring policies are out-dated and there is no monitoring program that links monitoring activities to management objectives. The absence of a Monitoring Program is a non-conformance, and minor CAR 03/10 is issued. |
| Major | Minor X | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall develop a monitoring program that links monitoring activities to management objectives. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Prior to next annual audit |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | A monitoring program has been developed and is articulated in the NSLFFPA policy document which has also been updated to address |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| | issues related to various monitoring functions. The results of monitoring activities are incorporated into a “Table of Management Objective Achievement” in second term management plans. This table provides a means to assess progress towards objective achievement and future monitoring requirements. This meets the conditions of this CAR and therefore this CAR is closed. |
| CAR Status: | Closed |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | None required. |

| | |
|---|--|
| CAR 05/10 | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 10.1.1 |
| Non-conformance | To date, plantations have not been considered within the scope of the certificate; however some of the new properties added to the group show characteristics of plantations. Management plans do not meet the requirements of 10.1. |
| Major Minor X | |
| Corrective Action Request: Where appropriate, individual management plans shall address the management of plantations. | |
| Timeline for conformance: | Prior to next annual audit |
| Evidence to close CAR: | The individual management plans have been revised (as appropriate) to explicitly address the management of plantation lands. Goals and objectives for plantation management to either manage the plantation for timber (these areas are excluded from the certified pool) or convert the planting area to a more natural multi-species cover types are included in the plan documents. This meets the conditions of this CAR and therefore this CAR is closed. |
| CAR Status: | Closed |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | None required. |

| | |
|---|---|
| CAR 06/10 | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator FM-35 SmartWood Chain-of-Custody Standard for Forest Management Enterprises (FMEs)] COC1.1, 1.3, 3.2, FSC-TMK-50-201 V1-0, 5.1 through 5.9 |
| Non-conformance | Procedures addressing CoC requirements do not include required elements. |
| Major Minor X | |
| Corrective Action Request: Procedures shall be revised to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the personnel/position(s) responsible for implementing the CoC control system; • Procedures shall be revised to include only the correct systems used for tracking material; • CoC records shall be maintained for five years; • Procedures specific to trademark use shall be developed. | |
| Timeline for conformance: | Prior to next annual audit |
| Evidence to close CAR: | Closed |
| CAR Status: | The Policy document of NSLFFPA has been revised to meet COC requirements. This meets the conditions of this CAR and therefore this CAR is closed. |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | None required. |

3.4. Identified non-conformances and corrective actions

A non-conformance is a discrepancy or gap identified during the assessment between some aspect of the FME’s management system and one or more of the requirements of the forest stewardship

standard. Depending on the severity of the non-conformance the assessment team differentiates between major and minor non conformances.

- **Major non-conformance** results where there is a fundamental failure to achieve the objective of the relevant FSC criterion. A number of minor non-conformances against one requirement may be considered to have a cumulative effect, and therefore be considered a major nonconformance.
- **Minor non-conformance** is a temporary, unusual or non-systematic non-conformance, for which the effects are limited.

Major non conformances must be corrected **before** the certificate can be issued. While minor non-conformances do not prohibit issuing the certificate, they must be addressed within the given timeframe to maintain the certificate.

Each non-conformance is addressed by the audit team by issuing a corrective action request (CAR) CARs are requirements that candidate operations must agree to, and which must be addressed, within the given timeframe of a maximum of one year period.

Major Corrective Action Requests

| | | |
|---|--------------|---|
| CAR 02/10 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 4.2.2 |
| Non-conformance | | Many landowners conduct their own harvesting operations and it is uncertain that landowners comply with Provincial health and safety requirements and are knowledgeable of regulations. The NSFFPA does not have a worker safety program. It is unclear as to whether forest management meets applicable laws covering health and safety and the absence of a worker safety program results in a non conformance and CAR 02/10 is issued. |
| Major X | Minor | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA is responsible for ensuring that group members meet health and safety requirements. NSLFFPA shall develop a health and safety program for group members and shall ensure that members meet requirements. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Prior to recertification. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | Pending |
| CAR Status: | | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | |

Minor Corrective Action Requests

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| CAR 01/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 1.5.1, 1.5.2 |
| Non-conformance | | There is no system or procedure for documenting either a) illegal harvesting of NSLFFPA woodlot owners' land by others, or b) purposeful or accidental illegal harvest of adjacent woodlot owners' properties by FSC certified owner operators or their contractors. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall revise their procedures to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear directive to woodlot owners that they should report incidents of illegal harvesting to the NSLFFPA; • Provision of evidence that woodlot owners take precautionary actions to prevent illegal harvest; and • NSLFFPA shall encourage FSC pool woodlot owners to use written contracts to protect them from illegal harvesting that may occur by contractors that they hire. | | |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Timeline for conformance: | Prior to the next annual audit. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | Pending |
| CAR Status: | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| CAR 02/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 3.3.1a |
| Non-conformance | | There is no system in place to ensure appropriate contact is made with First Nations people to give them an opportunity to participate in planning, to identify sites of special significance, or to comment on whether they feel the operations of NSLFFPA threatens or diminishes their treaty rights. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall attempt to contact and create a relationship with all seven bands in the seven eastern counties, or their appropriate representative, to ensure that free and informed consent is given and that procedures for the recognition and protection of sites of special significance to First Nations are developed. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Prior to the next annual audit. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | Pending |
| CAR Status: | | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
| CAR 03/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 4.4.3 |
| Non-conformance | | There is no requirement in place that obliges FSC pool woodlot owners to notify adjacent landowners 30 days prior to the commencement of major operations (if such operations are within 30 meters of adjacent properties). |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall revise their procedures to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a policy that requires landowners to notify adjacent landowners 30 days prior to the commencement of major operations that are within 30 meters of property boundaries; and • documentation that such notification has been given and that any disputes arising from such notification have been appropriately dealt with prior to commencement of major operations. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Prior to the next annual audit. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | Pending |
| CAR Status: | | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
| CAR 04/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 6.3.3 |
| Non-conformance | | Quantitative information on the range of natural variability was not provided in forest management plans and targets were not specified. Provincial information on the range of natural variability was not available at NSLFFPA office. Information on historic forest condition and ranges of natural variability would benefit the development of future management plans. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall collect and maintain information on the range of natural variability for use in the forest management planning process. | | |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Timeline for conformance: | Prior to the next annual audit. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | Pending |
| CAR Status: | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | |

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--|
| CAR 05/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 6.6.1 |
| Major | Minor x | An integrated pest management strategy has been developed and is included in the management plan appendices and the SOPs. However a program summary and précis of program activities is not available in the Public Summary. |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall include in their Public Summary documents a summary of its integrated pest management strategy and a précis of program activities that have occurred. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | Prior to the next annual audit. | |
| Evidence to close CAR: | Pending | |
| CAR Status: | OPEN | |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | |

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| CAR 06/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 7.1.3 |
| Non-conformance | | Landowner objectives and silvicultural prescriptions for the achievement of plan objectives are provided in the forest management plans. These plan objectives tend to be general in nature with no identified targets or timelines for objective achievement. Strategies for objective achievement are not specified. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall ensure that strategies for management plan achievement are documented in forest management plans and included in public summaries for all new and revised reports. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | Prior to the next annual audit. | |
| Evidence to close CAR: | Pending | |
| CAR Status: | OPEN | |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | |

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---|
| CAR 07/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 7.1.10 |
| Non-conformance | | It is not implicit that reduction factors to account for downward influences on the available harvest volumes (e.g. pests and/or pathogens) are applied in the determination of the annual allowable cut. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall demonstrate that reduction factors which account for the influence of pests, pathogens and other factors on available harvest volumes have been considered and applied (as appropriate) in the determination of the annual allowable cut. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | Prior to next annual audit. | |
| Evidence to close CAR: | Pending | |
| CAR Status: | OPEN | |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--|
| CAR 08/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 8.2.1 |
| Non-conformance | | Growth rate information is not currently collected or compiled by NSLFFPA. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request NSLFFPA shall collect or compile data and/ or information on forest growth rates. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Prior to next annual audit. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | Pending |
| CAR Status: | | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
| CAR 09/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 8.5 |
| Non-conformance | | While a monitoring program is being implemented, a regular summary is not compiled of the results of monitoring activities on the indicators listed in 8.2, and has not been made publicly available. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall prepare a summary of its monitoring program activities and make that summary available to the public. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Prior to the next annual audit. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | Pending |
| CAR Status: | | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| CAR 10/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 9.3.1 |
| Non-conformance | | The public summaries do not fully meet the requirements of the Maritime SLIMF Standard, with respect to the requirements for HCVs. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall ensure that the public summary documents fully comply with the requirements of the standard for HCVs. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Prior to the next annual audit. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | Pending |
| CAR Status: | | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
| CAR 11/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 10.1.2 |
| Non-conformance | | Several of the properties in the certified pool have total area in plantations that are in excess of 10% of the total area of the property. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall ensure that all certified pool properties do not have | | |

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| plantation areas in excess of the 10% of the total area of the property. | |
| Timeline for conformance: | Prior to the next annual audit. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | Pending |
| CAR Status: | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|---|
| CAR 12/11 | | Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator GC 6.2 |
| Non-conformance | | The Group entity procedures do not specify the maximum number of members that can be supported by the management system and the human and technical capacities of the Group entity. |
| Major | Minor x | |
| Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall specify in its procedures documentation the maximum number of members that can be supported by its management system and human and technical capabilities. | | |
| Timeline for conformance: | | Prior to the next annual audit. |
| Evidence to close CAR: | | Pending |
| CAR Status: | | OPEN |
| Follow-up Actions (if app.): | | |

3.5. Observations

Observations are very minor problems or the early stages of a problem which does not of itself constitute a nonconformance, but which the auditor considers may lead to a future nonconformance if not addressed by the client. An observation may be a warning signal on a particular issue that, if not addressed, could turn into a CAR in the future (or a pre-condition or condition during a 5 year re-assessment).

| | |
|---|---|
| OBS 01/11 | Reference Standard & Requirement: 6.5.1. |
| Some water crossings have open decks, debris can fall through the deck and into the watercourse. | |
| Observation: Closed (solid) decking on bridges should be promoted as a best management practice to assist in the protection of water quality. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| OBS 02/11 | Reference Standard & Requirement: 8.1.1. |
| While NSLFFPA implements an annual monitoring program, monitoring activities occur after forest operations have been completed. | |
| Observation: While there was no evidence of damage, a requirement exists to monitor active woodlands operations in order mitigate negative impacts when operations are in progress. | |

3.6. Notes for future audit teams

Notes are recorded for the benefit of future audit teams. They are items that were not fully addressed in this audit/assessment and do not constitute non-conformance. They warrant monitoring by future audit teams.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Note 01/11 | Reference Standard and Requirement: 1.3 | |
| Note for Future Annual Audits: Check to ensure that NSLFFPA consistently pays its appropriate taxes, rent and keeps its not-for-profit status up to date. | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closed | <input type="checkbox"/> Followed-up but still open | <input type="checkbox"/> Not followed-up this year |
| Comments | | |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Note 02/11 | Reference Standard and Requirement: 4.4.4 | |
| Note for Future Annual Audits: Notices of public meetings, public outreach, etc. should be checked. | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closed | <input type="checkbox"/> Followed-up but still open | <input type="checkbox"/> Not followed-up this year |
| Comments | | |

3.7. Certification Recommendation

Based on a thorough review of FME performance in the field, consultation with stakeholders, analysis of management documentation or other audit evidence the SmartWood assessment team recommends the following:

| | |
|---|--|
| Certification requirements met; Upon acceptance of CAR(s) issued below. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Certification requirements not met A major non-conformance was identified with regards to the conduct of health and safety inspections and monitoring. The certification certificate will not be re-issued until the major CAR is closed. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| FME has demonstrated that their described system of management is being implemented consistently over the whole forest areas covered by the scope of the evaluation | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: | |
| Subject to conformance with minor CARs (if applicable), FME's management system, if implemented as described, is capable of ensuring that all the requirements of the certification standards are met across the scope of the certificate | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: | |
| Issues identified as controversial or hard to evaluate. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: | |
| Certificate type recommended: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forest management and Chain of custody <input type="checkbox"/> Forest management only (no CoC) |

Once certified, the FME will be audited annually on-site and required to remain in conformance with the FSC principles and criteria as further defined by regional guidelines developed by SmartWood or the FSC in order to maintain certification. The FME will also be required to fulfill the corrective actions as described below. Experts from SmartWood will review continued forest management performance and conformance with the corrective action requests described in this report, annually during scheduled and/or random audits.

4. CLIENT SPECIFIC BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4.1 Ownership and land tenure description

The Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers Association (NSLFFPA) manages 131 properties (89 ownerships) as a SLIMF resource manager. NSLFFPA extends its certification program to woodlot owners within 250 kilometers of the NewPage mill in Port Hawkesbury in the counties of Cape Breton, Richmond, Victoria, Inverness, Guysborough, Antigonish and Pictou.

NSLFFPA is a not-for-profit association financed from a levy paid by members and non-members who sell pulpwood under a Collective Agreement to NewPage Port Hawkesbury.

NSLFFPA currently meets FSC SLIMF eligibility criteria.

4.2 Legislative and government regulatory context

Properties are privately held. Federal and provincial regulations with respect to environmental protection (e.g. protection of water quality, rare and endangered species) apply.

4.3 Environmental Context

The philosophy of NSLFFPA is the restoration of the Acadian Forest through the application of appropriate and timely forest management. The commitment of NSLFFPA and its membership to FSC Principles is conducive to long term forest sustainability. Member woodlots typically include the following characteristics;

- Significant areas of old field pasture which were regenerated to spruce
- Areas of past harvest with various stages of regeneration
- Insect damaged (mainly spruce budworm) stands from the 1970
- Wind and ice damage can be significant limiting factors for tree growth

Many of the private forest holdings in Nova Scotia are small and fragmented. Nevertheless these woodlots are significant on the landscape for the maintenance of ecological functions (such as wildlife habitat or refuges) and/or are important for the maintaining biodiversity at the local and regional scales.

4.4 Socioeconomic Context

Approximately 60% of the forested land in Nova Scotia is privately held. Small private ownerships account for 52% of this area with the average size of woodlot being approximately 45 ha. Given the extent of forest land in private ownership, fibre from private holdings is essential for the viability of the provincial forestry economy as private ownerships. Some 60% of the roundwood supplied to the provinces pulp and sawmills originates on private land.

From an economic perspective, private woodlots provide significant employment, stumpage income, export earnings to property owners and tax revenues to the provincial government. The woodlots are also important for non-traditional and non-consumptive uses such as maple syrup production and, berry picking; and recreational and tourism opportunities.

Woodland operations on private holdings can be characterized as small scale with most operations being conducted mainly by the woodlot owner or local hires. Due to the relatively small scale of their operations, private woodlot managers are frequently faced with significant challenges to implement sustainable forest management on their holdings. For woodlot owners the decision to introduce or increase forest management on their lands is an investment decision, dependent on the availability of inputs (i.e. time, labour, capital) and on the anticipated rate of return.

NSLFFPA has negotiated a collective agreement with NewPage in Port Hawkesbury for all pulpwood producers in the seven eastern counties of the province. The harvest from member properties was 1,627 tonnes in 2009.

APPENDIX I: Public summary of the management plan

(NOTE: To be prepared by the client prior to assessment, Information verified by assessment team)

| | |
|--|---|
| Main objectives of the forest management are: | |
| Primary priority: | The primary objective of all plans is the restoration and/or maintenance of the Acadian Forest. |
| Secondary priority: | Secondary management objectives are determined by individual landowners |
| Other priorities: | ; ; |
| Forest composition: | |
| Description of Silvicultural system(s) used: | |
| Silvicultural systems include even-age and uneven-age management strategies | |
| Silvicultural system | % of forest under this management |
| Even aged management | 60% |
| Clearcut (clearcut size range) | 100% |
| Shelterwood | |
| Uneven aged management | 40% |
| Individual tree selection | 60% |
| Group selection (group harvested of less than 1 ha in size) | 40% |
| Other types of management (explain) | |
| Harvest methods and equipment used: Mainly small scale operations (farm tractors) | |
| Estimate of maximum sustainable yield for main commercial species: | 225,332.44 m ³ |
| Explanation of the assumptions (e.g. silvicultural) upon which estimates are based and reference to the source of data (e.g. inventory data, permanent sample plots, yield tables) upon which estimates are based upon. | |
| Volume estimates are based on volumes from Provincial inventory tables. These tables are developed from permanent sample plots and field surveys. | |
| FME organizational structure and management responsibilities from senior management to operational level (how is management organized, who controls and takes decisions etc.) | |
| NSLFFPA has a Board of Directors. | |
| Structure of forest management units (division of forest area into manageable units etc.) | |
| Private Land | |
| Monitoring procedures (including yield of all forest products harvested, growth rates, regeneration, and forest condition, composition/changes in flora and fauna, environmental and social impacts of forest management, costs, productivity and efficiency of forest management) | |
| A monitoring program is in place. | |
| Environmental protection measures, e.g. buffer zones for streams, riparian areas, etc., protection measures for Rare Threatened and Endangered Species and habitat | |
| Other Sections may be added by the FME | |

APPENDIX II: FSC Reporting Form: Detailed FME information (Confidential)

(NOTE: To be prepared by the client prior to assessment, Information verified by assessment team)

| Forest management enterprise (FME) information: | |
|---|---|
| FME legal name: | Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers Association |
| FME legal jurisdiction: | Nova Scotia |
| Contact person (public) | Wilma Stubb |
| Address | 609 Church Street Unit 2 Port Hawkesbury Nova Scotia |
| Tel/FAX/email | 902 625-3800 |

| 1. Scope of Certificate | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Type of certificate: Group | | SLIMF Certificate Yes | |
| Group or Multiple FMU | Number of group members (if applicable): | | 92 |
| | Total number of Forest Management Units FMUs: (if applicable, list each below): | | 126 |
| | FMU size classification within the scope: | | |
| | | # of FMUs | total forest area FMU group |
| | < 100 ha | 91 | 4238.25 ha |
| | 100 – 1000 ha | 35 | 5599.73 ha |
| | 1000 – 10 000 ha | | ha |
| | > 10 000 ha | | ha |
| | SLIMF FMUs | 126 | 9837.98 ha |
| Group Certificate: List of FMUs included in the certificate scope provided in Appendix V: | | | |
| Multi-FMU Certificate: List of each FMU included in the certificate scope: N/A | | | |
| | FMU | Area | Forest Type |
| | | ha | |
| | | ha | |
| | | ha | |

| 2. FSC Product categories included in the FM/CoC scope | | | |
|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Main Class | Sub Class 1 | Subclass 2 or details |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Logs/Wood in the rough | 0312 - Logs of non-coniferous wood | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Logs/Wood in the rough | 0311-Logs of coniferous wood | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3451 - Wood charcoal | 34510 - Wood charcoal | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 311 - Wood, sawn or chipped lengthwise, sliced or peeled, of a thickness exceeding 6 mm; railway or tramway sleepers (cross-ties) of wood, not impregnated | 3110 - Wood, sawn or chipped lengthwise, sliced or peeled, of a thickness exceeding 6 mm; railway or tramway sleepers (cross-ties) of wood, not impregnated | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 312 - Wood continuously shaped along any of its edges or faces; wood wool; wood flour; wood in chips or particles | 3123 - Wood in chips or particles | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Non Wood Forest Products | 0392 - Plant parts/not flower-ornamental purposes | Parts of plants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | other | | |

| Species Included in the Scope of the Certificate | |
|--|------------|
| Common/Trade Name | Latin Name |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Total Sales/ Turnover | US\$ |

| 3. FME Info | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---|---------|---------|
| Location of certified forests (<i>Insert additional rows for multi-FMUs, Group members are reported in Group Appendix</i>) | Latitude: | N | degrees | minutes |
| | Longitude: | E | degrees | minutes |
| Forest zone | | | | |
| Certified Area under Forest Type | | | | |
| - Natural | 9688.07 ha | | | |
| - Plantation | 43.93 ha | | | |
| - Semi-natural, mix of plantation and natural forest | 105.98 ha | | | |
| Stream sides and water bodies | Linear Kilometers | | | |

| 4. Workers | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
| Number of workers including employees, part-time and seasonal workers: | | |
| Total workers | 4 workers (of which – provide detail below) | |
| - Local Full time employees (a:b) | 3 Male | 1 Female |
| - Non - Local Full time employees (c:d) | Male | Female |
| - Local Part time workers (e:f) | Male | Female |
| - Non- local part time workers (g:h) | Male | Female |
| Worker access to potable water on the work site | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Full time employees making more than \$2 a day | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Number of serious accidents (past 12 month period) | 0 | |
| Number of fatalities (past 12 month period) | 0 | |

| 5. Species and annual allowable cut | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Botanical name | Common trade name | Annual allowable cut | Actual harvest (2008) | Projected harvest for next year |
| | softwood | 156182.8 m3 | m3 | 15618.28 m3 |
| | hardwood | 69149.64 m3 | m3 | 6914.96 m3 |
| | | m3 | m3 | m3 |
| | | m3 | m3 | m3 |
| Total AAC | | 225332.44 m3 | m3 | 22533.24 m3 |

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Total annual estimated log production: | m3 |
| Total annual estimates production of certified NTFP: | 0 m3 |
| (list all certified NTFP by product type): | m3 m3 m3 |

6. Forest Area Classification

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Total certified area | 9837.98 ha |
| Total forest area in scope of certificate | 9837.98 ha |
| Ownership Tenure | Private lands |
| Management tenure: | |
| Forest area that is: | |
| Privately managed | 9837.98 ha |
| State/Public managed | 0 ha |
| Community managed | 0 ha |
| Area of production forests (areas where timber may be harvested) | 9808.23 ha |
| Area without <u>any</u> harvesting or management activities: strict forest reserves | 29.75 ha |
| Area without timber harvesting and managed only for production of non-timber forest products or services | 0 ha |

7. Forest Regeneration

| | |
|---|------------|
| Area or share of the total production forest area regenerated naturally | 9688.07 ha |
| Area or share of the total production forest area regenerated by planting or seeding | 149.91 ha |
| Area or share of the total production forest are regenerated by other or mixed methods (describe) | 0 ha |

8. High Conservation Values identified via formal HCV assessment by the FME and respective areas

| Code | HCV TYPES ¹ | Description: Location on FMU | Area |
|------|---|--|---------|
| HCV1 | Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia). | John Moloneylan Gunn | 6.35 ha |
| HCV2 | Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance. | | ha |
| HCV3 | Forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems. | Gordon MacKay John Vautour Steven Morrow Clyde Stanley Joseph Dilny Charles Cameron | 23.4 ha |

¹ The HCV classification and numbering follows the ProForest HCVF toolkit. The toolkit also provides additional explanation regarding the categories. Toolkit is available at <http://hcvnetwork.org/library/global-hcv-toolkits>.

| | | | |
|--|--|----------------|----------|
| | | Donnie MacLeod | |
| HCV4 | Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g. watershed protection, erosion control). | | ha |
| HCV5 | Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g. subsistence, health). | | ha |
| HCV6 | Forest areas critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities). | | ha |
| TOTAL HCVF AREA | | | 29.75 ha |
| Number of sites significant to indigenous people and communities | | | 0 |

9. Highly Hazardous Pesticide Use

| | |
|--|--|
| FME has a valid FSC derogation for use of a highly hazardous pesticide | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (if yes, fill in below) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Number of FSC highly hazardous pesticides used in last calendar year | None |
| Liters of FSC highly hazardous pesticides | 0 liters |
| Number of hectares treated with FSC highly hazardous pesticides | 0 ha |

APPENDIX III: Certification standard conformance checklist (confidential)

The following checklist must be completed separately for each FMU evaluated. For group certification assessments, checklists completed for each group member sampled shall demonstrate full conformance with all the requirements of the FSC P&C, except those already complied with at the group level. Based on the evaluation of conformance with each indicator, a conformance determination has been assigned. Conformance with indicators is determined by the entire assessment team through a consensus-based process. Where nonconformance with the standard is documented by the team, corrective action requests (CAR) are outlined. The following definitions apply, and are the basis for all certification assessments:

- Major CAR** Requirements that FME must meet before certification by SmartWood can take place.
- Minor CAR** Requirements that FME must meet, within a defined time period (usually within one year), during the period of the certification,
- Observation** **Observations** are very minor problems or the early stages of a problem which does not of itself constitute a nonconformance, but which the auditor considers may lead to a future nonconformance if not addressed by the client. An observation may be a warning signal on a particular issue that, if not addressed, could turn into a CAR in the future (or a pre-condition or condition during a 5 year re-assessment).

For each indicator presented below, the assessment team's determination of conformance and relevant findings are presented. Where applicable, CARs or observations are referenced under the indicator and detailed in the note section of the applicable criterion. Note: where comments have been received from stakeholders about the client's conformance related to a defined criteria, please include reference to related finding under the explanatory notes.

| | |
|---|--|
| PRINCIPLE 1. <u>COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND FSC PRINCIPLES</u> - Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria. | |
| 1.1. Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: There is currently insufficient monitoring and documentation to meet the requirements of this criterion. No health and safety monitoring is done during harvests. The lack of on-site inspections during harvest also increase the chance that woodlot owners doing their own work or contractors may purposely or inadvertently illegally harvest adjacent woodlots. Two CARs have been issued with respect to this criterion. | |
| 1.1.1 The operation complies with all applicable federal, provincial, county, municipal and local legislation. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> NSLFFPA is aware of applicable laws and legislation at all levels of government. With reference to these laws in management plans and attention to their requirements during onsite inspections, the audit team finds NSLFFPA to be in compliance. |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>1.1.2 Forest workers are aware of regulations relevant to their work and their legal responsibilities regarding them.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>There is no evidence that landowners or forest workers are trained with respect to their legal responsibilities. NSLFFPA currently interprets this as the responsibility of the landowner. Forest workers need to be made aware of applicable laws and their responsibilities and checked for compliance with such laws and regulations. Major CAR 02/10 is issued to address this concern</p> |
| <p>1.1.3 Up-to-date copies of such regulations are maintained and accessible to staff members.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Staff are aware of appropriate provincial and federal government websites that contain information on appropriate laws and regulations.</p> |
| <p>1.1.4 Compliance inspections are performed periodically and kept on record.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No compliance records from on-site inspections during forest operations to ensure that applicable laws and regulations are respected. Documentation of visits and compliance need to be shown. CAR 01/11</p> |
| <p>1.1.5 Where non-compliances are identified and recorded, corrective actions are implemented.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Policies for dealing with non-compliance are in place. No non-compliances have been reported yet. The forms for reporting landowner CARs in the policy manual.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>Major CAR 02/10: NSLFFPA is responsible for ensuring that group members meet health and safety requirements. NSLFFPA shall develop a health and safety program for group members and shall ensure that members meet requirements.</p> | |
| <p>1.2. All applicable and legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges shall be paid</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: Two types of tax information are pertinent here. First, NSLFFPA staff need to a means to check whether pool members are current with their payment of taxes. This is not currently done. Pool members merely check off that they are paid up on their taxes on their enrollment form. Secondly, NSLFFPA need to demonstrate that their own office rent, taxes and not-for-profit status are up to date. The latter was not checked during this audit due to a lack of time. The results in a note and one CAR.</p> | |
| <p>1.2.1 Information regarding legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges and their payment is maintained up-to-</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>For woodlot owners, a declaration of payment of taxes is part of the membership agreement.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>date and accessible and provisions have been made to meet the costs of future charges</p> | <p>NSLFFPA need to show evidence that their own Association taxes are paid. Note 02/11 addresses this issue.</p> |
| <p>NOTES: Note to Future Annual Audits 02/11: Future annual audit teams should check to ensure that NSLFFPA consistently pays its appropriate taxes, rent and keeps its not-for-profit status up to date.</p> | |
| <p>1.3. In signatory countries, the provisions of all the binding international agreements such as CITES, ILO conventions, ITTA, and Convention on Biological Diversity, shall be respected.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met.</p> | |
| <p>1.3.1 The applicant is aware of and understands their legal and administrative obligations with respect to international agreements.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The applicant is aware of these obligations. They have appropriate websites referenced in their policy and procedures document.</p> |
| <p>NOTES: None.</p> | |
| <p>1.4. Conflicts between laws, regulations and the FSC Principles and Criteria shall be evaluated for the purposes of certification, on a case-by-case basis, by the certifiers and the involved or affected parties.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This Criterion is met.</p> | |
| <p>1.4.1 Any identified conflicts and actions taken to address them are documented.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No documented conflicts between laws and FSC principles.</p> |
| <p>1.4.2 Involved and affected parties are consulted and kept informed.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No documented conflicts between laws and FSC principles.</p> |
| <p>NOTES: None.</p> | |
| <p>1.5. Forest management areas should be protected from illegal harvesting, settlement, and other unauthorized activities.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: There exist both the possibility of pool members being victims of illegal harvesting by others and complicit perpetrators of illegal harvest through the actions of their contractors (if contractors purposely or accidentally cross property boundaries).</p> | |

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| Neither scenario is adequately dealt with under current management. CAR 01/11 is issued. | |
| 1.5.1 A system exists for documenting and reporting to the appropriate authorities instances of illegal harvesting, settlement, occupation or other unauthorized activities. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> There is system in place for documenting illegal harvesting (either by member woodlot owners or of member woodlot owners' land by others) and there was evidence (verbal) of illegal harvesting by another party on a member's land. Landowners are not required or even necessarily encouraged to use contracts with contractors that they hire. This could lead to illegal logging, removal of unauthorized volumes above AAC with no recourse on the part of the landowner. Contracts would protect woodlot owners from unscrupulous contractors that are not aware of or committed to FSC principles. More active boundary line maintenance, and walking and marking lines before harvest will prevent accidental illegal harvesting. CAR 01/11 is issued. |
| 1.5.2 The applicant has effective measures in place, consistent with the nature of the perceived threat, intended to prevent illegal and unauthorized activities. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Activities that might prevent illegal logging, such as gating non-resident woodlots or walking boundary lines with neighbours, are not required. CAR 01/11 is issued. |
| NOTES: CAR 01/11: NSLFFPA's procedures shall be revised to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear directive to woodlot owners that they should report incidents of illegal harvesting to the NSLFFPA. • Provision of evidence that woodlot owners take precautionary actions to prevent illegal harvest. • NSLFFPA shall encourage FSC pool woodlot owners to use written contracts to protect them from illegal harvesting that may occur by contractors that they hire. | |
| 1.6 Forest managers shall demonstrate a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This Criterion is met. | |
| 1.6.1 The management plan clearly and succinctly states the owner's endorsement of all the Principles and Criteria of the FSC, as well as the standards of the Maritime Forest Region; and discloses all forest areas over which the owner/manager has some responsibility, whether as owner (including share or partial ownership), manager, consultant or other | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> The individual plans of woodlot owners are individual versions of a customized template. Each individual plan contains language that endorses Principles and Criteria of the FSC. As well, pool members exhibit commitment to the Principles and Criteria of FSC in their signed membership agreement documents. This commitment is further exhibited by pool member's signatures on their completed plans. |

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| responsibility. If the area being certified does not include all of the forest areas in which the owner/manager is involved, then the reason for this shall be stated. | |
| 1.6.2 The manager demonstrates a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> The NSLFFPA policy document exhibits a long-term commitment to FSC Principles and Criteria. |
| NOTES: None. | |

PRINCIPLE 2. TENURE AND USE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES - Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.

2.1 Clear evidence of long-term forest use rights to the land (e.g. land title, customary rights, or lease agreements) shall be demonstrated.

Criterion Level Remarks: This criteria is met.

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| 2.1.1 Ownership of the land by the applicant is demonstrated or the applicant has obtained the legal right to manage the lands and to utilize the forest resources for which certification is sought. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Management plans have legal deeds attached. A random check of plans revealed that most plans have copies of deeds attached, however, one plan did not have the deed attached. NSLFFPA immediately provided the required deed and no non-conformance was found. |
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None.

2.2 Local communities with legal or customary tenure or use rights shall maintain control, to the extent necessary to protect their rights or resources, over forest operations unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.

Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met.

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| 2.2.1 Aboriginal communities, local communities or other stakeholders who have recognized legal or customary tenure, or traditional use rights, have been identified. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> The Aboriginal communities and other stakeholders who have recognized legal or customary tenure or traditional use rights have been identified. There are seven First Nations bands in the region. Contact has not been made with all of them but they are identified. |
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| <p>2.2.2 The impacts of proposed forest management operations (including access management) on such uses are evaluated.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Customary rights are generally respected. The region has a strong tradition of private property rights so recognized trespass or customary tenure rights of non-owners are minimal. Woodlot owners allow legal trespass for hunting, etc. There have been no reports of complaints.</p> |
| <p>2.2.3 There is evidence that free and informed consent to forest management activities affecting legal, customary, or traditional use rights has been given by groups and individuals holding such rights and that their interests have been accommodated.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Customary rights are generally respected. The region has a strong tradition of private property rights so recognized trespass or customary tenure rights of non-owners are minimal. Woodlot owners allow legal trespass for hunting, etc. There have been no reports of complaints.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>None.</p> | |
| <p>2.3 Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed to resolve disputes over tenure claims and use rights. The circumstances and status of any outstanding disputes will be explicitly considered in the certification evaluation. Disputes of substantial magnitude involving a significant number of interests will normally disqualify an operation from being certified.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met.</p> | |
| <p>2.3.1 Where there is a dispute over tenure claim and use rights the manager is implementing a process to resolve the dispute as it pertains to the manager.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>An adequate dispute resolution process is outlined in Policy & Procedures document. No disputes have been identified to date.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>None.</p> | |

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| <p>PRINCIPLE 3. <u>INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S RIGHTS</u> - The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.</p> |
| <p>3.1 Indigenous peoples shall control forest management on their lands and territories unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.</p> |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: The current level of effort regarding obtaining informed consent from First Nations is not sufficient. Some bands and organizations have not been contacted at all or otherwise been made aware of the NSLFFPA's FSC application. CAR 02/11 is issued.</p> |

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| <p>3.1.1a First Nation's experience, knowledge, practices and insights are to be fairly considered in planning and operations. Rights of First Nations shall be formally recognized and given fair accommodation.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NSLFFPA has a sophisticated and informal relationship with many of the First Nations in its operating area. This takes a different form with different First Nations: some have a declared, but unwritten policy on communication with NSLLFFPA; one First Nation has a director that sits on the NSLLFFPA board; some are in monthly contact with NSLFFPA; and one First Nation is joining NSLFFPA directly as a FSC-certified member.</p> <p>However, this communication is not consistent across all First Nations and the audit team concludes that there is no system in place to ensure appropriate contact is made with all First Nations people to give them an opportunity to participate in planning. Contact with umbrella groups such as Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources or The Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn (KMK) should be made to make them aware of NSLFFPA policies and procedures and to find out if there are any concerns on the part of First Nations with respect to forest management activities on pool members properties. CAR 02/11 is issued.</p> |
| <p>3.1.2a Where the extent of the rights are in dispute, an appropriate, explicit and documented process for addressing and resolving grievances is in place and is being followed.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Dispute resolution procedures are laid out in the policy and procedures document. There have been no disputes identified to date. This criterion is met.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>CAR 02/11: NSLFFPA shall attempt to contact and create a relationship with all 7 bands in the 7 eastern counties, or their appropriate representative, to ensure that free and informed consent is given and that procedures for the recognition and protection of sites of special significance to First Nations are developed.</p> | |
| <p>3.2 Forest management shall not threaten or diminish, either directly or indirectly, the resources or tenure rights of indigenous peoples.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is not applicable</p> | |
| <p>3.2.1a Forest planning and management processes shall consider and meet obligations with respect to duly established Aboriginal and Treaty rights.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>As the applicant deals only with private land, and court cases regarding Aboriginal and Treaty rights in the region have dealt almost exclusively with Crown land, the audit team interprets this criterion to be not applicable.</p> |

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| NOTES: | |
| None. | |
| 3.3 Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to Indigenous People(s) shall be clearly identified in cooperation with such Peoples, and recognized and protected by forest managers. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: If culturally sensitive sites or values are discovered by woodlot owners or NSLFFPA staff, contact with First Nations may be appropriate. Contact with all the First Nations (or their representatives) in the region need to be made in order to ask their preferred protocol if such discoveries are made. One CAR is issued for this criterion. | |
| 3.3.1a Areas of cultural sensitivity shall be identified and incorporated in forest management/ operational plans. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> There is no system in place to ensure appropriate contact is made with First Nations people if areas of cultural sensitivity are discovered by landowners or NSLFFPA staff during the planning process or harvest operations. CAR 3/11 is issued to address this shortcoming. |
| 3.3.2a Informed consent by First Nations to any operations on culturally significant areas shall be granted. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No sites of cultural significance have been identified. |
| NOTES: | |
| None. | |
| 3.4 Indigenous peoples shall be compensated for the application of their traditional knowledge regarding the use of forest species or management systems in forest operations. This compensation is formally agreed upon with their free and informed consent before forest operations commence. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is not applicable. | |
| 3.4.1a First Nations shall be compensated for the application of their traditional knowledge regarding the use of forest species or management systems in forest operations. This compensation shall be formally agreed upon with their free and informed consent before forest operations commence. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To date there has been no need for NSLFFPA to solicit input from First Nations for management plans on private land. Therefore, this criterion is not applicable. |
| NOTES: | |

None.

PRINCIPLE 4. COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND WORKERS' RIGHTS - Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well being of forest workers and local communities.

4.1 The communities within, or adjacent to, the forest management area should be given opportunities for employment, training, and other services.

Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met.

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| 4.1.1 On public lands the owner/manager supports the pursuit by local people or the public of well established traditional, non-timber, environmentally appropriate uses that do not threaten native plant or animal populations or ecological functions. Typical examples include, but are not necessarily limited to: a) fishing and hunting; b) recreational use; c) wildcrafting; and d) wild food gathering. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All land is private. |
| 4.1.2 The landowner demonstrates support for the local community. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Members are selling their wood locally, hiring local contractors, purchasing goods and equipment locally. |
| 4.1.3 The applicant provides employment and training opportunities to forest workers and contractors from local and affected communities. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Applicant relies on third party training opportunities, namely the Nova Forest Alliance (BMPs) and Occupational Health and Safety Division of Department of Labour and Workforce Development. There is evidence that virtually all local contractors are hired from within the region. |

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None.

4.2 Forest management should meet or exceed all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families.

Criterion Level Remarks: Currently, no procedure is in place to ensure forest workers (either owner operator or contracted workers) comply with relevant occupational health and safe requirements. CAR 02/10 remains open and is elevated to a MAJOR.

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| <p>4.2.1 The owner/manager ensures that all forest workers comply with all relevant provincial occupational health and safety requirements.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>There is currently no on-site inspection to check occupational health and safety conformance. A new policy in place, but to date there is no evidence of the practice or documentation of the practice. CAR 02/10 remains open to address this.</p> |
| <p>4.2.2 The applicant has developed and is implementing a program of worker safety. Where the owner/manager has more than six workers the program includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a comprehensive safety policy; b) a program to monitor the condition and functionality of equipment; c) identification of safety training needs and the provision of safety training; d) the use of appropriate safety equipment by forest workers; and e) periodic review of the safety program to keep it up-to-date and comprehensive. | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NSLFFPA has addressed worker safety issues in a new "harvest monitoring checklist", but this document and how and when it is to be applied) is not referenced in NSLFFPA policies and procedures manual.</p> <p>Currently, on-site inspections during harvest and other silvicultural activities are not conducted. This lack of inspection makes it impossible to determine if health and safety regulations are being followed.</p> <p>This CAR 02/09 remains open and is elevated to Major.</p> <p>No woodlot owner has more than six workers, therefore this section of the indicator is not applicable.</p> |
| <p>4.2.3 Forest workers are aware of relevant regulations and their responsibilities in implementing them.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NSLFFPA is aware of relevant regulations and their responsibilities in implementing them. There is also evidence that woodlot owners that operate their own land are aware of regulations. The use of timber sale contracts in which contractors state their knowledge of regulations and responsibilities would provide additional protection for landowners by contractors.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>MAJOR CAR 02/10: Prior to re-certification, NSLFFPA is responsible for ensuring that group members meet health and safety requirements. NSLFFPA shall develop a health and safety program for group members and shall ensure that members meet requirements.</p> | |
| <p>4.3 The rights of workers to organize and voluntarily negotiate with their employers shall be guaranteed as outlined in Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labor Organization (ILO).</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met.</p> | |
| <p>4.3.1 The rights of workers to organize and voluntarily negotiate with their</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> |

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| <p>employers shall be guaranteed as outlined in Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labour Organization (ILO).</p> | <p>Interviews were conducted with association employees. They are aware of their rights, though it should be noted both foresters that work for the organization are employed on a contract basis.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>None.</p> | |
| <p>4.4 Management planning and operations shall incorporate the results of evaluations of social impact. Consultations shall be maintained with people and groups (both men and women) directly affected by management operations.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criteria was mostly met, however there is one note and one CAR issued. The note is related to documentation of public meetings and public outreach (Note 03/10). Future audits should check documentation for such meetings (frequency, content, response to public concerns if any were raised.) A CAR is issued for 4.4.3. as no evidence exists and it is not the current practice to notify adjacent landowners prior to the commencement of major operations.</p> | |
| <p>4.4.1 Employees must be given opportunities to participate in, and give feedback on, major management decisions, policy formulation and on-the-ground practices.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not applicable as employees of the applicant are one step removed from land management on the private woodlots and woodlot owners do not have employees working on their land, only contractors.</p> |
| <p>4.4.2 Local communities and community organizations directly affected by forestry activities must be given an opportunity to participate in the setting of forest management goals and in forest management planning.</p> <p>Note: This does not apply in the case of small forests; it does apply for low-intensity forests.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not applicable to small forests.</p> |
| <p>4.4.3 When carrying out major operations within 30 metres of a boundary line, and/or within 100 m of a dwelling, the owner(s) of adjacent land(s) must be given a minimum of 30 days notice and their concerns considered prior to the commencement of the activity.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>There is no evidence of a requirement for members to meet with adjacent landowners prior to the commencement of major operations. CAR 03/11 has been issued to address this shortcoming.</p> |
| <p>4.4.4 The owner/managers(s) shall demonstrate their cooperation, support, or assistance to other sustainable</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> |

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| management initiatives within the region, appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operation, upon which their operation may have an influence. | The applicant is cooperating with Mersey Tobiatic Research Institute and the Association for Sustainable Forestry. NSLFFPA also gave verbal evidence of other education, outreach and supportive activities of other sustainability initiatives. Efforts regarding public education and support of other sustainability initiatives should be effectively documented for future audits. Note 03/11 addresses this issue. |
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| 4.4.5 Harvest operations and road designs must consider impacts on visual and sound quality in the vicinity of high use areas. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Due to the fact that operations are on private lands most activities do not generally occur in the vicinity of high use areas. There is a dispute resolution process to address issues arising from harvesting. To date there are no recorded disputes. |
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CAR 03/11 Prior to the next annual audit, NSLFFPA shall revise their procedures to include:

- A policy that requires landowners to notify adjacent landowners 30 days prior to the commencement of major operations that are within 30 meters of property boundaries; and
- documentation that such notification has been given and that any disputes arising from such notification have been appropriately dealt with prior to commencement of major operations.

Note for Future Annual Audits 03/11: Notices of public meetings, public outreach, etc. should be checked.

4.5 Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed for resolving grievances and for providing fair compensation in the case of loss or damage affecting the legal or customary rights, property, resources, or livelihood of local peoples. Measures shall be undertaken to avoid such loss or damage.

Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met.

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| 4.5.1 The applicant has a process in place for fairly resolving disputes with employees as well as disputes with other resource users and the general public that result from forest planning and operations. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> The dispute resolution process identified in the policy and procedures document is sufficient. References to SmartWood as a potential "appeals" body were removed. |
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NOTES:

None.

PRINCIPLE 5. BENEFITS FROM THE FOREST - Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.

5.1 Forest management should strive toward economic viability, while taking into account the full environmental, social, and operational costs of production, and ensuring investments necessary to maintain the ecological productivity of the forest.

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| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met. | |
| 5.1.1 (Does not apply to SLIMFs) | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.1.2 The owner/manager provides for reinvestment to enhance economic, social and forest value for the long term. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, landowners are spacing, planting, building roads. |
| 5.1.3 (Does not apply to SLIMFs) | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.1.4 Stumpage rates and roundwood prices being paid to landowners and governments by a landowner or mill seeking certification should be fair and equitable given logging conditions, timber quality, volume, and local experience with comparable log markets. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Prices achieved by NSLFFPA are higher than the provincial average and have been for some time. Collective bargaining agreement is currently up for renewal but will very likely be renewed. |
| NOTES: None. | |
| 5.2 Forest management and marketing operations should encourage the optimal use and local processing of the forest's diversity of products. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met. | |
| 5.2.1 (Does not apply to SLIMFs) | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.2 Without high grading, the manager captures the optimal value of forest products throughout the production cycle (e.g., planning, harvesting, stand management, sorting, merchandising). | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> While there is an inability to market hog fuel or biomass cost effectively, woodlot owners are managing for a range of products and merchandising their harvest to attain highest possible values. |
| 5.2.3 The manager evaluates different options for enhancing the optimal use of forest products from the management unit and implements measures to achieve optimal use. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> NSLFFPA keeps track of marketing opportunities and encourages woodlot owners to manage products for optimal use within the constraints of the local market. Some products are very difficult to market. |
| NOTES: | |

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| None | |
| 5.3 Forest management should minimize waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met. | |
| 5.3.1 All harvested merchantable and marketable timber is utilized, unless left on-site to provide site-specific environmental benefits, as defined by the owner/manager. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> All harvested material is utilized to the extent possible. During the field audit some material had been left on site due to its poor quality (beetle damage) and the lack of a market for the low grade material, however, the team finds no non-conformance with this indicator. |
| 5.3.2 Standard Operating Procedures shall be in place and implemented to minimize damage to the residual stand, including non-merchantable/non-marketable trees and trees being left for future harvest. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> There are standard operating procedures related to damage and non-merchantable trees included on harvest checklist. No residual stand damage was observed during the field audit. |
| NOTES: None. | |
| 5.4 Forest management should strive to strengthen and diversify the local economy, avoiding dependence on a single forest product. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met. | |
| 5.4.1 A diversity of timber and non-timber forest products, compatible with site conditions and local economic objectives for strengthening and diversifying the local economy over time, are produced at present, and predicted to continue under management plan objectives/forecasts. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Most woodlot owners are interested in non-timber values and many are interested in non-timber products. Management strategies are provided in the management plans as required. |
| 5.4.2 In response to interest from the local community, the manager evaluates proposed production of non-timber forest products within the management unit, and identifies and implements | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> It is within the rights of landowners to allow or deny access for use of private property for NTFPs. Some woodlot owners are interested in using NTFPs themselves or harvesting some for sale. No requests from the local community for access to NTFPS are known. |

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| <p>forest management practices that allow for the production of a diversity of non-timber forest products compatible with site conditions and local objectives for strengthening and diversifying the local economy over time.</p> | |
| <p>NOTES: None.</p> | |
| <p>5.5 Forest management operations shall recognize, maintain, and, where appropriate, enhance the value of forest services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met.</p> | |
| <p>5.5.1 The manager identifies forest services provided by the management unit including, but not necessarily limited to, watersheds, fisheries and recreation, drawing on existing information (e.g., relevant assessments, inventories, studies) and public consultation as applicable.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Forest services are identified in the plans and implemented on the ground. The audit team saw evidence of landowners providing recreation and providing access to neighbours, leaving riparian buffers and practicing active management for ecological and recreational services provided by forests.</p> |
| <p>5.5.2 The manager assesses and describes existing and potential impacts of forest management activities on forest services.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Important forest services are identified in the plans. As appropriate, reserves are being implemented to protect the values. During the field assessment the team observed an old growth forest reserve and a buffer to protect a nest.</p> |
| <p>5.5.3 The manager identifies and implements measures required to maintain or enhance the range of forest services provided by the management unit.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Measures are articulated in the forest management plans. Buffers were implemented in accordance with the plans on the inspected properties.</p> |
| <p>NOTES: None.</p> | |
| <p>5.6 The rate of harvest of forest products shall not exceed levels that can be permanently sustained.</p> <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met.</p> | |

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| 5.6.1 | (Does not apply to SLIMFs) | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.6.2 | Rates of harvest of any forest product shall be sustainable within ecological limits, and harvest levels shall be set within a justifiable growth period and growth area. | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Appendix 6 of the management plans provides a methodology for the calculation of a sustainable yield. The methodology indicates that the harvest levels are based on yield information from the provincial inventory which provides stand volumes for stand types at various stand ages (incorporates growth in the volume projection). Actual volume removals are based on stand silvicultural prescriptions (prepared by a forester or forest technician) which indicate the proposed treatment and the permissible volume removal (i.e. 1/3 of the volume in a selection harvest). Area and volume removals for buffer zones or other special management zones are also deducted from the available harvest area or volume estimate. Harvest levels were determined to be set within a "justifiable growth period and growth area". Though the growth period is very narrowly set the audit team acknowledges that, across the group, the growth area is recognized solely as the area containing merchantable timber. Interviews with DNR staff and a forestry consultant indicated that the methodology adopted by NSLFFPA is appropriate for the size of properties and scale of operations on private land.</p> |
| 5.6.3 | A pre-harvest assessment shall be implemented. | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Pre-harvest assessments are undertaken and implemented.</p> |
| NOTES: | | |
| None. | | |

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| PRINCIPLE 6. <u>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT</u>- Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest. | | |
| 6.1 Assessment of environmental impacts shall be completed -- appropriate to the scale, intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources -- and adequately integrated into management systems. Assessments shall include landscape level considerations as well as the impacts of on-site processing facilities. Environmental impacts shall be assessed prior to commencement of site-disturbing operations. | | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met. | | |
| 6.1.1 | Environmental impacts shall be assessed prior to and following the commencement of site-disturbing | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Environmental impacts of management activities are assessed primarily through site assessments.</p> |

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| <p>activities. Assessments shall include landscape level considerations as well as the impacts of onsite processing facilities.</p> | <p>Procedures for the assessment are provided in Section 4.5.of the Policy Manual. The Management plan and SOPs are also used to guide field operations.</p> |
| <p>6.1.2 The owner/manager demonstrates a good knowledge of the variety and extent of soil types in their landholdings and uses this knowledge in its management plans, including road system design and silviculture design.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>During the field visits landowners and the NSLFFPA contract foresters demonstrated a good understanding of soil types and the environmental implications of forest management activities on various soil types. Most landowners have a long history of active land management on the properties.</p> <p>A forest ecosystem classification system (FEC) which includes soil and site attributes is used in the development of the forest management plan and contractors attended an FEC training program. Management plans addressed this issue as appropriate.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>None.</p> | |
| <p>6.2. Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas). Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. Inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting shall be controlled.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met.</p> | |
| <p>6.2.1 Threatened and endangered species (as listed by provincial and federal bodies) and their habitat shall be protected or managed in accordance with approved recovery plans. Where recovery plans are not yet approved, a precautionary approach should be taken to avoid disturbance and protect the species and their habitats.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Threatened and endangered species are listed in management plans and strategies forest management are developed as appropriate. The NSLFFPA program foresters are knowledgeable about threatened and endangered species. The Species at Risk in Nova Scotia (MTR) document was used for the development of plans and landowners report to DNR if species are encountered. Threatened and endangered species are not a major issue in the Cape Breton Highlands.</p> |
| <p>6.2.2 Forest owner/managers shall identify and implement measures within their sphere of influence to reduce the threat (from both timber and non-timber activities) to species that are rare, vulnerable or under investigation by COSEWIC or their provincial equivalents.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Landowners protect areas of significant habitat with reserves and buffer zones which are prescribed in the individual management plans.</p> |

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| <p>6.2.3 Primordial forests, where such forests exist on the management unit, shall be included in the High Conservation Value Forest assessment described in Principle 9. Conservation zones shall be established in these primordial forests and identified on maps, and shall not be harvested.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Primordial forests are identified in forest management plans as HCVF and have been set aside as reserves.</p> |
| <p>6.2.4 The owner/manager cooperates fully with resource management agencies in the efforts to control illegal hunting, trapping and fishing.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Signs are posted on individual properties and landowners monitor public use of their land. Provincial policy in NS dictates that private lands are available for public enjoyment and hunting.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>None.</p> | |
| <p>6.3 Ecological functions and values shall be maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including:</p> <p>a) Forest regeneration and succession.</p> <p>b) Genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity.</p> <p>c) Natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: NSLFFPA meets the requirements of this indicator except for 6.3.3 which requires a analysis of rate of nature variability.</p> | |
| <p>6.3.1 The present and projected silviculture, harvest and regeneration methods shall result in a mix of tree species, stand types, landscape ecology and stand structures that mimic the natural variability and historic local pattern of the Acadian Forest.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The stated management goal of all management plans is the restoration of the Acadian Forest. Silvicultural practices observed during the field assessment where conducive to the achievement of this goal. Areas under even-age management were renewed to Acadian Forest conditions by natural or artificial regeneration strategies. Uneven-age renewal strategies included in-fill planting and natural seeding. These strategies, when properly implemented, should result in a mix of Acadian tree species.</p> |
| <p>6.3.2 Silvicultural and harvesting practices shall result in canopy closure levels that are consistent with the natural disturbance pattern of the eco-site</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Site visits indicated canopy closure levels consistent with natural disturbance events. Management operations to salvage insect killed or moribund timber consisted of small patch cuts.</p> |
| <p>6.3.3 Silviculture practices result in age, diameter, species and height class</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> |

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| <p>distributions that are within the range of natural variability.</p> | <p>Management systems were observed in the field that will result in a range of ages, species, diameters and heights within and between stands. Management objectives within the plans reviewed are consistent with the attainment of the criterion.</p> <p>However, quantitative information on the range of natural variability was not provided in forest management plans and targets where not specified. Information on the range of natural variability was not available at NSLFFPA office. Information on historic forest condition and ranges of natural variability would benefit the development of future management plans. CAR 04/11 has been issued to address this concern.</p> |
| <p>6.3.4 Coarse woody debris in the form of large fallen trees, large logs and snags of various sizes is maintained in each stand sufficient to maintain wildlife habitat attributes and forest ecosystem productivity through the regeneration period.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The post harvest monitoring checklist requires that course woody debris be evident following harvest. The field site visits verified the presence of sufficient course woody debris on cutover areas and the adequate retention of snag trees in cutovers and within residual stands.</p> |
| <p>6.3.5 Harvesting, site preparation, and other forest operations should be undertaken in a manner that minimizes site and soil damage and soil nutrient loss.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>There was very little evidence of site damage observed during the field audit and practices were evident where efforts had been made to minimize the potential for site damage (i.e. use of brush mats on extraction trails).</p> <p>While some localized rutting was noted on one property, this was not widespread and the landowner outlined remedial measures to be undertaken on the site.</p> <p>Skid trails were typically located on extraction trails utilized in previous harvests and were in general well laid out within harvest areas. On one of the properties inspected skid trails on were run at right angles to the prevailing slope, however evidence of significant erosion was not present. The post harvest monitoring checklist also provides for the monitoring of site impacts.</p> |
| <p>6.3.6 The rationale for all decisions to plant tree seedlings (instead of relying on natural regeneration) shall be well defended and documented in the management plan.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The rationale for planting decisions is provided in tables and is documented in forest management plans. Tree plantings observed in the field site visits were to native Acadian species.</p> |
| <p>6.3.7 The owner/manager shall strive to approximate spatial patterns and distributions of forest communities</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |

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| <p>representative of natural forest characteristics for the landscape level.</p> <p>Note: This indicator applies to low intensity forests and large groups of small forests, but does not apply to individual small forests or small groups.</p> | |
| <p>6.3.8 Forest fragmentation is minimized and connectivity is maintained or restored between important wildlife habitats and key landscape features such as HCVFs, late seral stage forests and protected areas.</p> <p>Note: This indicator applies to low intensity forests and large groups of small forests, but does not apply to individual small forests or small groups.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>6.3.9 Local seed sources shall be maintained by ensuring that viable populations remain at the landscape level.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Local nurseries are the source for seedlings. The maritime provinces are considered a single seed zone.</p> |
| <p>6.3.10 Specific wild life habitat objectives shall be set and adequate habitat levels must be maintained and developed.</p> <p>Note: This indicator applies to low intensity forests and large groups of small forests, but does not apply to individual small forests or small groups.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>6.3.11 Management plans are in place and are implemented to protect water quality in watersheds and to prevent unnatural fluctuations in water temperature and discharge.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Special Management Zone buffers are established to protect riparian zones and habitats in the management plans. Riparian buffers were evident during the field site visits.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>CAR 04/11: NSLFFPA will collect and maintain information on the range of natural variability for use in the forest management planning</p> | |

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| process. | |
| 6.4 Representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape shall be protected in their natural state and recorded on maps, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations and the uniqueness of the affected resources. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: Where applicable to small groups, this criterion is met. | |
| 6.4.1 Existing ecosystems on the forest management unit are inventoried according to classification systems in use in the Province and documented on management plan maps. Note: This indicator applies to low intensity forests and large groups of small forests, but does not apply to individual small forests or small groups. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.4.2 Representative samples of ecosystems that are present on the management unit and underrepresented in protected areas on the landscape are designated in the management plan and on maps and protected in their natural state. Note: This indicator applies to low intensity forests and large groups of small forests, but does not apply to individual small forests or small groups. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.4.3 The owner/manager should actively support multi-stakeholder initiatives that include government, industrial and private landowners, and non-government agencies to establish systems of protected areas in the region of the landholding. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Buffer zones and special management areas are documented in management plans and maintained in the field. Staff consulted with DNR for the maintenance of a deer yard (Don Mingles – FMP in process). FMP contractors are advised to review provincial shapefiles for mapped habitats for proximity to mapped values and the field site inspections verify the presence or absence of values. Where habitat is verified, protected areas are established within the forest management plans. |
| NOTES: None | |

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| 6.5 Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to: control erosion; minimize forest damage during harvesting, road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances; and protect water resources. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met. | |
| 6.5.1 Road construction and maintenance must be conducted so as to minimize damage to the forest and water areas. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Field evidence indicated that roads were generally well constructed and maintained. Cross drains were utilized and properly located. Water crossings observed in the field were generally well-constructed. |
| 6.5.2 The owner/manager shall comply with all provincial regulations, policies, guidelines and license conditions pertaining to riparian and wetland protection during harvesting and road construction, including those set forth in Appendix D. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Riparian areas are maintained in accordance with current legislation. Road construction practices protected streams and wetlands. Wetlands are protected on an as encountered basis on the individual properties of the group. The policy manual indicates that wetlands must be protected according to provincial regulations |
| 6.5.3 On private lands the owner/manager shall implement the riparian and wetland protection measures as set forth in Appendix D that apply on public lands in that Province. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands are protected on an as encountered basis on the individual properties of the group. The policy manual indicates that wetlands must be protected according to provincial regulations. The field site audit confirmed that buffers meeting the provincial standard were implemented. |
| 6.5.4 The owner/manager is implementing relevant best management practices pertaining to the protection of water quality. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Appendix # 11 of all management plans provides best management practices when working around water. Post harvest monitoring by the NSLFFP staff assesses the impact of operations on watersheds. |
| NOTES: None. | |
| 6.6 Management systems shall promote the development and adoption of environmentally friendly non-chemical methods of pest management and strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides. World Health Organization Type 1A and 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides; pesticides that are persistent, toxic or whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use; as well as any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited. If chemicals are used, proper equipment and training shall be provided to minimize health and environmental risks. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: NSLFFPA has established targets for the reduction of herbicide use with an objective to eliminate herbicide use | |

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| <p>on member properties by 2016. CAR 05/11 is issued requiring NSLFFPA to include in their Public Summary a summary of its integrated pest management strategy and a précis of program activities that have occurred.</p> | |
| <p>6.6.1 The applicant has developed and is implementing an integrated pest management program, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a commitment to attaining pesticide-free forest management; b) a target date for the timely elimination of the use of chemical herbicides on the management unit; c) interim targets and objectives for the reduction of chemical herbicide use; and d) a summary of the program, including the targets and objectives, is included in the Public Summary (7.1). | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>An integrated pest management strategy has been developed and is included in the management plan appendices and the SOPs. The staff forester meets with all prospective members to explain NSLFFPA's commitment to pesticide-free management. Prior to being accepted as a member, all woodlot owners must sign a commitment form that says they will follow the FSC Principles and Criteria. Prospective members know that this includes a commitment to meet the timeline for the elimination of pesticide use established by NSLFFPA as a condition of membership.</p> <p>During the last 5 years there has been no use of pesticide on certified properties. NSLFFPA has established a target that requires any member woodlots using chemicals to reduce use by 30% by December 31, 2014 and to eliminate use by December 31, 2016.</p> <p>However a program summary and précis of program activities is not available in the Public Summary. CAR 05/11 has been issued to address this concern.</p> |
| <p>6.6.2 The manager is effectively implementing the targets and objectives described in 6.6.1 and demonstrates continuous reduction of chemical herbicide use on the management unit.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NSLFFPA has established a target that requires any member woodlots using chemicals to reduce use by 30% by December 31, 2014 and to eliminate use by December 31, 2016.</p> |
| <p>6.6.3 Chemical pesticides are used only when their use is essential to meet silvicultural objectives as described and limited in 6.6.4, to control major insect outbreaks or to control invasive exotic species, and when non-chemical management practices are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) not available; or b) ineffective in achieving silvicultural objectives; or c) prohibitively expensive, taking into account environmental and social costs, risks and benefits. <p>If chemicals are used, the manager</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>During the last 5 years there has been no use of pesticide on certified properties.</p> |

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| <p>uses the least environmentally damaging formulation and application method practical.</p> | |
| <p>6.6.4 The use of chemical herbicides is further limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) plantations, subject to the provisions of Criterion 10.7 and the overall limitations on the extent of plantations permissible within the management unit; b) stand establishment on cutblocks that were created prior to FSC certification, and with a phaseout period of no more than two years from the date of initial certification; and c) as a last resort, to maintain, enhance or restore forest ecological functions and ecological values as described in Criterion 6.3, with a written and publicly available rationale for each such use. | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>During the last 5 years there has been no use of pesticide on certified properties.</p> |
| <p>6.6.5 The manager makes publicly available detailed and timely information about the total amount of pesticide use each year on the management unit, including data on at least one year prior to initial certification.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>There has been no pesticide use during the past five years. A spreadsheet tracking pesticide use is maintained at NSLFFPA office and is available for review upon request.</p> |
| <p>6.6.6 Highly hazardous pesticides as determined by FSC International are not used.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Pesticides listed as highly hazardous by FSC International are not used.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>CAR 05/11: NSLFFPA shall include in their Public Summary documents a summary of its integrated pest management strategy and a précis of program activities that have occurred.</p> | |
| <p>6.7 Chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non-organic wastes including fuel and oil shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at off-site locations.</p> | |

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| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met. | |
| 6.7.1 Chemical, containers, liquid and solid non-organic wastes including fuel and oil shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at off-site locations. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> The Policy Manual and SOP describe the process for disposal. Landowners indicated that materials were disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at suitable locations. |
| 6.7.2 Biodegradable oil and other biodegradable products should be used when available and cost-effective. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biodegradable products are not widely available. |
| 6.7.3 An active recycling program is in place for used motor and machine oil and plastic products. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Where available re-cycling is conducted. |
| NOTES: None. | |
| 6.8. Use of biological control agents shall be documented, minimized, monitored, and strictly controlled in accordance with national laws and internationally accepted scientific protocols. Use of genetically modified organisms shall be prohibited. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met. | |
| 6.8.1 Biological control agents (e.g., Bt) are used only where alternative pest control methods are: a) not available; or b) ineffective in achieving silvicultural objectives; or c) prohibitively expensive, taking into account environmental and social costs, risks and benefits. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Biological control agents are not utilized. |
| 6.8.2 The impacts and effectiveness of the use of biological control agents are monitored. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological control agents are not utilized. |
| 6.8.3 Genetically modified organisms shall not be used. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Genetically modified organisms are not used. |

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| NOTES: | |
| None. | |
| 6.9 The use of exotic species shall be carefully controlled and actively monitored to avoid adverse ecological impacts. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met. | |
| 6.9.1 Exotic tree species shall not be introduced unless the owner/manager provides clear evidence that: a) there is a known risk and low risk of invasion or adverse effects on surrounding habitat; b) it is not introduced into areas identified as of High Conservation Value under Principle 9; c) it is limited to no more than 5% of the management unit; d) there is not more than 50ha of contiguous area of exotic species within an age class; and e) the exotic species are not concentrated in a particular eco-site type. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> No exotic species are planted, as the objective of NSLFFPA is to restore the Acadian Forest. |
| 6.9.2 The use of any exotic species is monitored for efficacy, invasiveness, unusual mortality, disease or insect outbreak, and adverse ecological impacts. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> No exotic species are planted as the objective of NSLFFPA is to restore the Acadian Forest. |
| NOTES: | |
| None. | |
| 6.10 Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion: a) Entails a very limited portion of the forest management unit; and b) Does not occur on high conservation value forest areas; and c) Will enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, long-term conservation benefits across the forest management unit. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met. | |

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| <p>6.10.1 Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) does not take place in areas identified as of High Conservation Value Forests under Principle 9; b) is limited to no more than 5% of the management unit; c) is limited to no more than 50ha of contiguous area of plantation conversions within an age class; and d) is not concentrated in a single eco-site type. | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No land conversions to plantations are occurring as artificial renewal initiatives are focused on the restoration of Acadian species. There have been no conversions to plantations in areas identified as High Conservation Value Forests.</p> |
| <p>6.10.2 Management actions are undertaken to convert unused non-forest areas (landings, gravel pits, camps, roads, trails, former agricultural lands) back to forest.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Field site visits verified that old trails, landings and roads were being renewed to forest land through both artificial and natural regeneration.</p> |
| <p>NOTES: None.</p> | |

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| <p>PRINCIPLE 7. <u>MANAGEMENT PLAN</u> - A management plan -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations -- shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long-term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.</p> | |
| <p>7.1. The management plan and supporting documents shall provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. management objectives, b. description of the forest resources to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands, c. description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories, d. rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection, e. provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics, f. environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments, g. plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species, h. maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership, i. description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used. | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: Most of the elements of this criterion have been met. The exception is that the current methodology for the calculation of the ACC does not apply a reduction factor for volume that may be lost to insects, pathogens etc. CAR 02/11 has been issued</p> | |

| to address this shortcoming. | | |
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| 7.1.1 | <p>The vision and objectives of the owner/forest manager shall be articulated clearly to employees, contractors, and made available to suppliers, customers and the interested public.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The requirement to articulate forest management plan objectives is noted in the management plan template which is used to develop all management plans. Owner objectives for the property are also discussed during the initial interview with the member.</p> |
| 7.1.2 | <p>The owned/managed lands, and the adjacent lands, shall be described and mapped in adequate detail to provide the information necessary for making management decisions in accord with the other sections of this document.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Appendix 1 and Appendix 5 of the FMP documents contain property maps.</p> |
| 7.1.3 | <p>The management plans shall document the owner's management strategies and prescriptions for meeting silvicultural and management objectives within the context of the forest's long-term sustainability.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Landowner objectives and silvicultural prescriptions for the achievement of plan objectives are provided in the forest management plan. The plan objectives tend to be general with no identified targets or timelines for objective achievement.</p> <p>However, strategies for objective achievement are not specified. CAR 06/11 has been issued to ensure that strategies for objective achievement are articulated in the planning documents (management plans and public summaries).</p> |
| 7.1.4 | <p>Areas of special ecological significance, including habitat of vulnerable, rare, threatened, and endangered species, primordial Acadian forest, areas with unusually high species diversity, or exceptional cultural significance shall be clearly marked on maps with buffer areas and management options described as appropriate to the scale and sensitivity of the cultural or ecological feature.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Areas of special interest and ecological significance are identified and mapped in the forest management plans. Management options are appropriate for the maintenance and protection of the identified values.</p> |
| 7.1.5 | <p>The management plan shall document measures for the protection of identified sites of significant cultural, spiritual, or aesthetic value.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant cultural, spiritual or aesthetic values have been identified which require specific measures for protection to date.</p> |

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| <p>7.1.6 For all lands which do not have the physical or functional characteristics of the natural forest for that site (see references in the Glossary definition of “eco-site”), a restoration plan shall be included in the management plan which considers various options and which moves the site toward a condition more characteristic of an appropriate natural forest type.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>There are no lands under management that require the development of a distinct restoration plan. The objective of all plans in the membership pool is the restoration and/or maintenance of the Acadian forest.</p> |
| <p>7.1.7 Written guidelines and specification for avoiding damage to ecosystems (e.g. in road building and harvesting) shall be comprehensive, readily available and understandable to field personnel. The greater landscape context of individual stands shall be taken into account when prescribing activities.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Guidelines are provided in a Best Practices Manual (March 2004). Best management practices are discussed at Annual Meetings.</p> |
| <p>7.1.8 On management units larger than 500 hectares the management plan shall include a landscape level plan which the owner/manager has initiated or participated in, in accordance with the requirements of Criterion 4.4. If the management unit is less than 500 hectares, the owner/manager shall participate where opportunity exists to the development of landscape level forest planning in the local community. Plans shall take into consideration landscape-level restoration objectives at local and regional scales, including habitat connectivity for species that have large home ranges.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>There are no member properties larger than 500 ha. Management plans developed for properties less than 500 ha assist in meeting broader landscape objectives through the protection of significant habitats, the maintenance of forest reserves and habitat connectivity through the maintenance of forest cover on the landscape.</p> |
| <p>7.1.9 The management plan shall include the assumptions and rationale for the harvest level determinations made in accordance with the requirements of Criterion 5.6, incorporating historical information, research findings and</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Assumptions for harvest levels and the rationale for the harvest are provided in Appendix 6 of each forest management plan. Reductions to the available harvest area are made to account for stand openings and inoperable areas for all stands. Volumes are derived from Provincial Inventory Tables which are based on growth and yield data derived from provincial level field data collection and</p> |

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| traditional wisdom, as appropriate. | information derived from permanent sample plots. |
| 7.1.10 The predictable future influence of pests, pathogens and non-commercial species on allowable harvests, timber values, stocking etc. shall be taken into account and prepared for in the management plan. | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Calculation of the annual allowable cut is an area volume calculation based on volume per hectare, stand area and an operable area percent. Stand volumes are used to calculate a rate of harvest which is determined by multiplying the stand volume by the percent removal for the treatment being implemented. The resultant allowable harvest volume is then divided by the plan term (10 years) to obtain annual harvest levels. It is not implicit that reduction factors for other downward influences on the AAC (i.e. pests) other than operability constraints are accounted for in the preparation of the plan. CAR 07/11 is issued to address this concern.</p> |
| 7.1.11 Access and harvest schedules and cycles, as well as harvesting techniques and technologies, shall be described and justified. | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A Harvest Plan is provided in Appendix 14 of the management plan.</p> |
| 7.1.12 The management plan shall include a strategy for monitoring forest changes and assessing the environmental and social impacts of forest management. Note: This indicator applies to low intensity forests and large groups of small forests, but does not apply to individual small forests or small groups. | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>CAR 06/11: NSLFFPA shall ensure that strategies for management plan achievement are documented in forest management plans and included in public summaries.</p> <p>CAR 07/11: NSLFFPA shall demonstrate that reduction factors which account for the influence of pests, pathogens and other factors on available harvest volumes have been considered and applied (as appropriate) in the determination of the annual allowable cut.</p> | |
| <p>7.2 The management plan shall be periodically revised to incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion has been met.</p> | |
| 7.2.1 Indicators of progress relative to objectives shall be identified and an | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> |

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| <p>effective and thorough plan for monitoring these indicators shall be in place.</p> | <p>Most plans are still in the first term of management. During the field audit a second term management plan was reviewed which contained a table of objective achievement for the first five year term.</p> |
| <p>7.2.2 Management plans shall be current and be revised at least every five years to incorporate the results of the monitoring described in Principle 8.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Plans are revised on a five year term.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>None</p> | |
| <p>7.3. Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plan.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion is met.</p> | |
| <p>7.3.1 Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plan.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Meetings are held with landowners and with contractors to discuss planning approaches and strategies for the implementation of the management plan. There is a requirement to ensure that active operations are effectively monitored. While NSLFFPA implements an annual monitoring program. Monitoring activities occur after forest operations have been completed. A requirement exists to monitor active woodlands operations in order to ensure silvicultural prescriptions are being properly implemented and to mitigate negative impacts when operations are in progress. Refer to Observation 02/11.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>Observation 02/11: NSLFFPA should ensure that the monitoring of active operations is included in its field monitoring program.</p> | |
| <p>7.4. While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the primary elements of the management plan, including those listed in Criterion 7.1</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: The public summary of plans do not fully met the requirements of the standard. CAR 09/11 is issued to address this concern.</p> | |
| <p>7.4.1 A summary of the management plan, including all elements referred to in 7.1, shall be made available to the public.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Plans are available to the public upon request at the NSLFFPA office. Current plan summaries do not fully meet the requirements of the standard as all elements of the requirements of 7.1. are not summarized (i.e. they do not provide information with respect to strategies for objective achievement, the rationale for harvest etc). CAR 09/11 is issued.</p> |

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CAR 09/11: NSLFFPA shall prepare a summary of its monitoring program activities and make that summary available to the public.

PRINCIPLE 8. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT - Monitoring shall be conducted -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management -- to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.

8.1 The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be determined by the scale and intensity of forest management operations as well as the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment. Monitoring procedures should be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.

Criterion Level Remarks: Monitoring to date occurs largely after forest operations have been completed. A requirement exists to monitor forest management activities during implementation in order that potential negative impacts can be mitigated when operations are in progress. Observation 02/11 is made to address this concern.

8.1.1 A documented monitoring program that outlines the frequency, intensity, and rationale for monitoring is implemented with the following characteristics:

- a) consistent and replicable monitoring procedures;
- b) monitoring of the performance of the owner/manager and the owner/managers employees and contractors, including compliance with Standard Operating Procedures and contract specifications;
- c) identification of staff members or others with responsibility for implementing monitoring programs; and,
- d) procedures for taking corrective actions where non-compliances are identified.

Conformance with Indicator: Yes No N/A

A documented monitoring program is in place which identifies monitoring procedures and procedures for corrective actions to address non-conformances. Monitoring is conducted by NSLFFPA contract foresters.

Monitoring to date occurs largely after forest operations have been completed. A requirement exists to monitor forest management activities during implementation in order that potential negative impacts can be mitigated when operations are in progress. Observation 02/11 has been made to address this concern.

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Observation 02/11. While there was no evidence of damage, a requirement exists to monitor active woodlands operations in order mitigate negative impacts when operations are in progress.

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| <p>8.2. Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor, at a minimum, the following indicators: (a) yield of all forest products harvested; (b) growth rates, regeneration and condition of the forest; (c) composition and observed change in the flora and fauna;(d) environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations; (d) costs, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion has been met with the exception of a requirement to collect growth rate information (CAR 08/11).</p> | |
| <p>8.2.1 Data are collected concerning: a) yield of all forest products harvested; b) growth rates, regeneration, forest health, productivity and condition of the forest; c) composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna (including rare, threatened, and endangered listed species), and seral stages, as a result of forest operations; d) designated watershed condition, water quality, road condition and drainage structures; e) environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations; and, f) costs, productivity and efficiency of forest management.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Information on the harvest yields is collected and compiled on an annual basis. Growth rate information is not currently collected although information on growth is implicit within provincial inventory volume assumptions. CAR 08/11 has been issued to address this shortcoming. Information on forest health and condition is assessed during pre-harvest and post harvest surveys. A summary table of forest stand attributes is provided in the plan with supporting maps. Field monitoring occurs on the basis of harvest activities and some incidental site visits are conducted where feasible and appropriate. Landowners maintain their own financial information.</p> |
| <p>8.2.2 Owner/managers should monitor species at risk as well as protected units on their property, wherever possible in collaboration with other landowners and government agencies.</p> | <p>Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The NSLFFPA Policy Document indicates that landowners are to monitor their properties for species at risk and protected areas on their properties. Discussions with landowners during the field assessment indicated that monitoring is conducted.</p> |
| <p>NOTES:</p> <p>CAR 08/11: Prior to the next annual audit, NSLFFPA shall collect or compile data and or information on forest growth rates.</p> | |
| <p>8.3. Documentation shall be provided by the forest manager to enable monitoring and certifying organizations to trace each forest product from its origin, a process known as the "chain-of-custody."</p> | |
| <p>Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion has been met.</p> | |

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| 8.3.1 A documented procedure shall be implemented for identifying all products leaving the forest so that the recipient can easily determine the forest of origin. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> A Property Identification Number (PID) is issued for all products shipped to the mill. |
| NOTES: None. | |
| 8.4. The results of monitoring shall be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the management plan. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion has been met. | |
| 8.4.1 (Does not apply to SLIMFs) | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.4.2 The results of monitoring are incorporated into forest management as well as periodic revisions of the management plan, policy, and procedures. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Results of monitoring have been incorporated into second generation plans prepared to date. The policy and procedures documents have been updated to address issues arising from monitoring functions. |
| NOTES: None | |
| 8.5 While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring indicators, including those listed in Criterion 8.2. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: A summary of monitoring activities and the results of monitoring functions has not been compiled. CAR 09/11 has been issued to address this requirement. | |
| 8.5.1 A regular summary is compiled of the results of monitoring activities on the indicators listed in 8.2, and is made publicly available. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> A monitoring program is being implemented and results of monitoring are recorded in tabular form in management plans, however a summary document of the results of monitoring has not be prepared and made available to the public. Refer to CAR 09/11. |
| NOTES: Refer to CAR 09/11. | |

PRINCIPLE 9. MAINTENANCE OF HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS - Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always

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| be considered in the context of a precautionary approach. | |
| 9.1. Assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests will be completed, appropriate to scale and intensity of forest management. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion has been met. | |
| 9.1.1 Using the assessment framework in Appendix F, the owner/manager determines the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> HCVF's are determined by reviews of DNR maps and documents, discussions with landowners, stakeholder consultations and site inspections conducted by NSLFFPA contract staff. |
| 9.1.2 Primordial forests, where they are present on the management unit, shall be identified as High Conservation Value Forests. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Primordial forests have been identified as HCVF and are designated as reserves in the reviewed forest management plans. |
| 9.1.3 The owner/manager shall obtain external advice in order to carry out this assessment. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> DNR staff are consulted on an as required basis. |
| 9.1.4 The owner/manager shall make the assessment document(s), associated maps, and external review report available to the public. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Documents are available for review upon request at the NSLFFPA office. |
| NOTES: None. | |
| 9.2 The consultative portion of the certification process must place emphasis on the identified conservation attributes, and options for the maintenance thereof. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion has been met | |
| 9.2.1 The owner/manager includes consideration of high conservation value aspects in the course of meeting the requirements under Criterion 4.4. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> High value conservation values are maintained on properties where they exist and contribute to maintenance of diversity at the landscape scale. |
| NOTES: None. | |

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| 9.3 The management plan shall include and implement specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the applicable conservation attributes consistent with the precautionary approach. These measures shall be specifically included in the publicly available management plan summary. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: With the exception of the requirement to provide a public summary this criterion has been met. CAR 10/11 is issued to address this concern. | |
| 9.3.1 The management plan and supporting documents include specific strategies to ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the High Conservation Values identified in 9.1.1. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> The management plans reviewed contained a section on HCVF and indicated that the management strategy would be precautionary in nature and maintain HCVF values on the property. |
| 9.3.2 The measures included in 9.3.1 shall be included in the public summary (7.4), without compromising confidentiality or risk to the identified features and values. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> The public summary does not contain a summary of the strategies adopted to ensure the maintenance of High Conservation values. Refer to CAR 10/11. |
| 9.3.3 The owner/manager implements the measures and strategies outlined in 9.3.1. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> The site inspections revealed that required measures and strategies were being implemented in the field to maintain the integrity of the identified sites. |
| 9.3.4 Conservation zones shall be established in primordial forests and identified on maps, and shall not be harvested. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Old growth forest areas are identified in forest management plans and maintained as reserves. |
| NOTES: CAR 10/11: Prior to the first annual audit, NSLFFPA shall ensure that the public summary documents fully comply with the requirements of the standard with respect to HCVs. | |
| 9.4. Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain and enhance the applicable conservation attributes. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: This criterion has been met. | |
| 9.4.1 Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> An annual monitoring program is being implemented. |

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None

PRINCIPLE 10. PLANTATIONS - Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1 - 9, and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world's needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.

PRINCIPLE APPLICABILITY NOTES: In the FSC Maritime Standards, “plantations” are defined as follows: “Forest areas lacking most of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems, as defined by FSC approved national and regional standards of forest stewardship, which result from the human activities of planting, sowing or intensive silvicultural treatments.”

Plantations in the Maritimes

Plantations occur where high intensity silviculture is practiced, but it does not follow that all areas subjected to intensive silvicultural treatments are plantations. Plantations are characterized as areas undergoing “non-natural” succession. As it is referred to here, this results in some or all of the following stand characteristics being maintained in a highly altered state, or even eliminated:

- Tree species diversity (especially deciduous species. and/or other noncommercial spp.);
- Stand diversity (e.g., patchiness, presence of small openings, variability in tree species diversity, density and/or canopy layers);
- Stand structures and associated habitats resulting from pathogens or physical damage (e.g., forked stems, hollow boles, dead tops);
- Early successional habitats (e.g., berry patches, areas dominated by brush and herbaceous species)
- Presence of mature and old trees; and,
- Coarse woody debris.

In other words, plantations are highly managed treed areas with few natural characteristics. They exist for timber production purposes and are not managed to provide other values or amenities on the planted sites.

The standard recognizes plantations in three contexts: 1) existing lands that are subject to intensive forestry; 2) circumstances in which natural forest is converted to plantations, subject to the limitations described in Criterion 6.10; and 3) new plantations established through afforestation, when previously non-forested land (e.g., farm land) is converted into forest. (Although not all areas afforested necessarily result in plantations, this discussion is limited to those areas which do.)

The total area of land managed as plantations is limited in this standard to no more than 10% of the management unit. The restoration and natural forest management objectives in this Principle should be understood in this context, and in consideration of the ways that intensive forest management can help to generate conservation benefits elsewhere on the management unit.

10.1. The management objectives of the plantation, including natural forest conservation and restoration objectives, shall be explicitly stated in the management plan, and clearly demonstrated in the implementation of the plan.

Criterion Level Remarks: Several properties in the certified pool had plantation areas in excess of the 10% limitation of the standard. CAR

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| 11/11 was issued to address this requirement. | |
| 10.1.1 The management plan contains goals and objectives for the management and harvest of plantations, including relevant and spatially explicit natural forest conservation and restoration objectives. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> The individual management plans have been revised (as appropriate) to explicitly address the management of plantation lands. Goals and objectives for plantation management are provided. |
| 10.1.2 The total area of plantations shall not exceed 10% of the management unit. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Several properties in the certified pool have area in plantations that exceed the 10% limitation set by the standard. CAR 11/11 has been issued to address this concern. |
| 10.1.3 The objectives referred to in 10.1.1 are implemented. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> All artificial renewal activities inspected during the field audit renewed harvested areas to native species. Historic plantations contained ingress of native species providing site biodiversity. |
| NOTES: CAR 11/11: NSLFFPA shall ensure that all certified pool properties do not have plantation areas in excess of the 10% of the total area of the property. | |
| 10.2. The design and layout of plantations should promote the protection, restoration, and conservation of natural forests, and not increase pressures on natural forests. Wildlife corridors, streamside zones, and a mosaic of stands of different ages and rotation periods, shall be used in the layout of the plantation, consistent with the scale of the operation. The scale and layout of plantation blocks shall be consistent with the patterns of forest stands found within the natural landscape. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: N/A | |
| 10.2.1 The location, management and extent of plantation areas are consistent with landscape level biodiversity objectives. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10.2.2 In proportion to the scale of operations, plantation blocks contain features that enhance ecological values, including but not limited to, shoreline and riparian areas, and, if applicable, wildlife | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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| corridors and a range of age classes and tree species. | |
| NOTES: N/A | |
| 10.3. Diversity in the composition of plantations is preferred, so as to enhance economic, ecological, and social stability. Such diversity may include the size and spatial distribution of management units within the landscape, number and genetic composition of species, age classes, and structures. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: N/A | |
| 10.3.1 Plantation areas shall be planned and managed in a manner that contributes to site level and landscape level diversity. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| NOTES: N/A | |
| 10.4. The selection of species for planting shall be based on their overall suitability for the site and their appropriateness to the management objectives. In order to enhance the conservation of biological diversity, native species are preferred over exotic species in the establishment of plantations and the restoration of degraded ecosystems. Exotic species, which shall be used only when their performance is greater than that of native species, shall be carefully monitored to detect unusual mortality, disease, or insect outbreaks and adverse ecological impacts. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: N/A | |
| 10.4.1 The management plan shall include a rationale for the selection of all species used in plantations, including their overall site suitability and a justification for the use of any non-native species. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10.4.2 The use of exotic tree species in plantations is subject to the limitations described in 6.9.1 and 6.9.2. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| NOTES: N/A | |
| 10.5 A proportion of the overall forest management area, appropriate to the scale of the plantation and to be determined in regional standards, shall be managed so as to restore the site to a natural forest cover. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: Some properties have plantations in the certified area that exceed 10% of the area of the property. CAR 11/11 is issued to address this requirement. | |
| 10.5.1 The total area of plantations shall not exceed 10% of the management unit. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |

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| | CAR 11/11 has been issued to address this requirement as several individual ownerships have plantation areas in excess of 10% of the certified area. |
| NOTES: Refer to CAR 11/11. | |
| 10.6. Measures shall be taken to maintain or improve soil structure, fertility, and biological activity. The techniques and rate of harvesting, road and trail construction and maintenance, and the choice of species shall not result in long term soil degradation or adverse impacts on water quality, quantity or substantial deviation from stream course drainage patterns. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: N/A | |
| 10.6.1 The management plan shall include a rationale for the selection of all species used in plantations, including their overall site suitability and a justification for the use of any non-native species. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10.6.2 Preparation of a site for planting shall: a) consider and mitigate adverse effects on soil structure, fertility and biological activity; b) include appropriate and effective erosion control measures; and c) not alter watercourses. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| NOTES:N/A | |
| 10.7 Measures shall be taken to prevent and minimize outbreaks of pests, diseases, fire, and invasive plant introductions. Integrated pest management shall form an essential part of the management plan, with primary reliance on prevention and biological control methods rather than chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Plantation management should make every effort to move away from chemical pesticides and fertilizers, including their use in nurseries. The use of chemicals is also covered in Criteria 6.6 and 6.7. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: N/A | |
| 10.7.1 The risk of damage to plantations by wind, fire, pests, and disease should be minimized through measures that include management for a diverse forest across the management unit in terms of age/height, species, structure | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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| and genetics. | |
| 10.7.2 The owner/manager should avoid the use of fertilizers and nursery stock that has been treated with chemicals. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| NOTES: N/A | |
| 10.8 Appropriate to the scale and diversity of the operation, monitoring of plantations shall include regular assessment of potential on-site and off-site ecological and social impacts, (e.g. natural regeneration, effects on water resources and soil fertility, and impacts on local welfare and social well-being), in addition to those elements addressed in principles 8, 6, and 4. No species should be planted on a large scale until local trials and/or experience have shown that they are ecologically well-adapted to the site, are not invasive, and do not have significant negative ecological impacts on other ecosystems. Special attention will be paid to social issues of land acquisition for plantations, especially the protection of local rights of ownership, use, or access. | |
| Criterion Level Remarks: N/A | |
| 10.8.1 The management and impacts of plantations (on-site and off-site) are monitored in accordance with the provisions of Principle 8. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10.8.2 On management units where the total area of plantations is greater than 1000 hectares, a monitoring program shall include a specific focus on the impacts of the plantation(s) on: a) natural regeneration; b) water resources; c) soil fertility; d) local welfare; and e) social well-being. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10.8.3 Before exotic species are planted on an operational basis the owner/manager ensures that field trials have been conducted in the region, sufficient to ensure full compliance with all aspects of Indicator 10.4.1. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| NOTES: N/A | |
| 10.9 Plantations established in areas converted from natural forests after November 1994 normally shall not qualify for certification. Certification may be allowed in circumstances where sufficient evidence is submitted to the certification body that the owner/manager is not responsible directly or indirectly for such conversion. | |

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| Criterion Level Remarks: N/A | |
| 10.9.1 The prior land use and, if applicable, forest type(s) present on lands which are now under plantations are documented. The year or estimated year of conversion is reported. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10.9.2 For plantations established in areas converted from natural forest after November 1994, the manner and reason for conversion is documented, and is consistent with the requirements of 6.10. | Conformance with Indicator: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| NOTES: N/A | |

APPENDIX IV: Chain-of-Custody Conformance (confidential)

Note: This CoC Appendix is used for FMEs only selling standing timber, stumpage, logs and/or chips produced within a FMU covered by the scope of the certificate. FME certificate scopes that include primary or secondary processing facilities shall include an evaluation against the full FSC CoC standard: FSC-STD-40-004 V2. Refer to that separate report Appendix.

Definition of Forest Gate: (check all that apply)

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Standing Tree/Stump: FME sells standing timber via stumpage sales. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The Log Landing: FME sells wood from the landing/yarding area. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | On-site Concentration Yard: Transfer of ownership occurs at a concentration yard under the control of the FME. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Off-site Mill/Log Yard: Transfer of ownership occurs when offloaded at purchaser's facility. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: <i>explanation</i> |
| Comments: | |

Scope Definition of CoC Certificate:

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| Does the FME further process material before transfer at forest gate? <i>(If yes then processing must be evaluated to full CoC checklist for CoC standard FSC-STD-40-004 v2.)</i> Note: This does not apply to on-site production of chips/biomass from wood harvested from the evaluated forest area. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: | |
| Is the FME a large scale operation (>10,000 hectares) or a Group Certificate? <i>(If yes then CoC procedures for all relevant CoC criteria shall be documented.)</i> | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: | |
| Does non-FSC certified material enter the scope of this certificate prior to the forest gate, resulting in a risk of contamination with wood from the evaluated forest area (e.g. FME owns/manages both FSC certified and non-FSC certified FMUs)? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: | |
| Does FME outsource handling or processing of FSC certified material to subcontractors (i.e. milling or concentration yards) prior to transfer of ownership at the forest gate? <i>(If yes a finding is required for criterion CoC 7 below.)</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: | |
| Does FME purchase certified wood from other FSC certificate holders and plan to sell that material as FSC certified? <i>(If yes then a separate CoC certificate is required that includes a full evaluation of the operation against FSC-STD-40-004 v2.)</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: | |
| Does FME use FSC and/or Rainforest Alliance trademarks for promotion or product labeling? <i>(If FME does not or has no plans to use FSC/RA trademarks delete trademark criteria checklist below.)</i> | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: | |

Chain-of-Custody Criteria [FM-35 SmartWood Chain-of-Custody Standard for Forest Management Enterprises (FMEs)]

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| 1. Quality Management | |
| COC 1.1: FME shall define the personnel/position(s) responsible for implementing the CoC control system. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: The staff positions responsible for COC are identified in NSLFFPAs Policy document. | |

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| COC 1.2: All relevant staff shall demonstrate awareness of the FME's procedures and competence in implementing the FME's CoC control system. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: Staff demonstrated a good working knowledge of the flow of material and how material is tracked. | |
| CoC 1.3: FME procedures/work instructions shall provide effective control of FSC certified forest products from standing timber until ownership is transferred at the forest gate. <i>Note: For large scale operations (>10,000ha) and Group Managers, CoC procedures covering all relevant CoC criteria shall be documented.</i> Including: a) Procedures for physical segregation and identification of FSC certified from non-FSC certified material. (If applicable) b) Procedures to ensure that non-FSC certified material is not represented as FSC certified on sales and shipping documentation. (If applicable) c) Procedures to include FME FSC certificate registration code and FSC claim (FSC Pure) on all sales and shipping documentation for sales of FSC certified products. d) Recordkeeping procedures to ensure that all applicable records related to the production and sales of FSC certified products (e.g. harvest summaries, sales summaries, invoices, bills of lading) are maintained for a minimum of 5 years. e) Procedures to ensure compliance with all applicable FSC/Rainforest Alliance/SmartWood trademark use requirements. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: Procedures are documented in NSLFFPA Policy document. | |

2. Certified Material Handling and Segregation

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| COC 2.1: FME shall have a CoC control system in place to prevent the mixing of non-FSC certified materials with FSC certified forest products from the evaluated forest area, including: a) Physical segregation and identification of FSC certified from non-FSC certified material. b) A system to ensure that non-FSC certified material is not represented as FSC certified on sales and shipping documentation. Note: If no outside wood is handled by FME within scope of certificate, mark as N/A. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: | |
| CoC 2.2: FME shall identify the sales system(s) or "Forest Gate", for each FSC certified product covered by the Chain of Custody system: i.e. standing stock; sale from log yard in the forest; sale at the buyer's gate; sale from a log concentration yard, etc. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: Forest gate is the log yard. | |
| CoC 2.3: FME shall have a system that ensures that FME products are reliably identified as FSC certified (e.g. through documentation or marking system) at the forest gate. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: Annual Volume Reports are filled out by the landowner with a Property Identification Number (PID). NSLFFPA provides NewPage with a list of certified members and their associated PIDs. Upon receipt of wood NewPage identifies volumes (by certified input categories) by PID and sends a report of the certified volume received by PID to NSLFFPA. | |
| CoC 2.4: FME shall ensure that certified material is not mixed with non-FSC certified material at any stage, up to and including the sale of the material. Note: If no outside wood is handled by FME within scope of certificate, mark as N/A. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: | |

3. Certified Sales and Recordkeeping

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| COC 3.1: For material sold with FSC claim the FME shall include the following information on sales and shipping documentation: a) FME FSC certificate registration code, and b) FSC certified claim: FSC Pure | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
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| Findings: NSLFFPA provides a listing of its certified members and their associated PIDs to NewPage. These PIDs are linked to individual COC sub-codes. All material is FSC pure. | |
| CoC 3.2: FME shall maintain certification production and sales related documents (e.g. harvest summaries, invoices, bills of lading) for a minimum of 5 years. Documents shall be kept in a central location and/or are easily available for inspection during audits. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: Documents are maintained at the NSLFFPA office. | |
| CoC 3.3: FME shall compile an annual report on FSC certified sales for SmartWood containing monthly sales in terms of volume of each FSC certified product sold to each customer. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: Volumes are compiled annually. | |

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| 4. Outsourcing | |
| CoC 4.1: FME control system shall ensure that CoC procedures are followed at subcontracted facilities for outsourcing and FME shall collect signed outsourcing agreements covering all applicable FSC outsourcing requirements per FSC--40-004 v-2.0 <i>FSC Standard for Chain of Custody</i> November 2007. Note 1: If FME outsources processing or handling of FSC certified material the outsourcing report appendix is required. Note 2: Check N/A If FME does not outsource processing or handling of FSC material. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: | |

5. FSC/Rainforest Alliance Trademark (TMK) Use Criteria

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| Standard Requirement: The following section summarizes the FME's compliance with FSC and Rainforest Alliance trademark requirements. Trademarks include the Forest Stewardship Council and Rainforest Alliance/SmartWood names, acronyms (FSC), logos, labels, and seals. This checklist is directly based on the FSC labeling standard (FSC-STD-40-201 <i>FSC on-product labeling requirements</i> (version 2.0) and FSC-TMK-50-201 V1-0 <i>FSC Requirements for the Promotional Use of the FSC Trademarks by FSC Certificate Holders</i> . References to the specific FSC document and requirement numbers are included in parenthesis at the end of each requirement. (Rainforest Alliance Certified Seal = RAC seal). | |
| General | |
| COC 5.1: FME shall have procedures in place that ensure all on-product and off product FSC/Rainforest Alliance trademark use follows the applicable policies: | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: Policy document has procedures for trademark use. | |
| COC 5.2: FME shall have procedures in place and demonstrate submission of all FSC/Rainforest Alliance/SmartWood claims to SmartWood for review and approval prior to use, including" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) On-product use of the FSC label/RAC seal; b) Promotional (off-product) claims that include the FSC trademarks ("Forest Stewardship Council", "FSC", checkmark tree logo) and/or the Rainforest Alliance/SmartWood trademarks (names and seal)(50-201,2.3). | |
| Findings: Policy document has procedures for trademark use. | |
| COC 5.3: FME shall have procedures in place and demonstrates that all trademark review and approval correspondence with SmartWood is kept on file for a minimum of 5 years (40-201, 1.10; 50-201, 2.4): | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: The policy document has procedures for trademark use. | |

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| Off-product / Promotional | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check if section not applicable (FME does not, and does not plan to use the FSC trademarks off-product or in promotional pieces) | |
| Note: promotional use items include advertisements, brochures, web pages, catalogues, press releases, tradeshow booths, stationary templates, corporate promotional items (e.g., t-shirts, cups, hats, gifts). | |

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| When applicable to the FME's promotional/off-product use of the trademarks, the criteria below shall be met: | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: The Policy document has been revised to address promotional/off product use. | |
| COC 5.4: If the FSC trademarks are used for promotion of FMUs, FME shall limit promotion to FMUs covered by the scope of the certificate. | |
| COC 5.5: In cases that the Rainforest Alliance trademarks are used (50-201, 13.1, 13.2): a) The FSC trademarks shall not be at a disadvantage (e.g., smaller size); b) The FSC checkmark tree logo shall be included when the RAC seal is in place. | |
| COC 5.6: In cases that the FSC trademarks are used with the trademarks (logos, names, identifying marks) of other forestry verification schemes (SFI, PEFC, etc.), SmartWood approval shall be in place (50-201, 3.0). | |
| COC 5.7: Use of the FSC trademarks in promotion of the FME's FSC certification shall not imply certain aspects are included which are outside the scope of the certificate (50-201, 1.6). | |
| COC 5.8: Use of the FSC trademarks on stationery templates (including letterhead, business cards, envelopes, invoices, paper pads) shall be approved by SmartWood to ensure correct usage (50-201, 12.0). | |
| COC 5.9: In cases that the FSC trademarks are used as part of a product name, domain name, and/or FME name, SmartWood approval shall be in place (50-201, 9.0, 10.0). | |

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| On-product | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check if section not applicable (FME does not, and does not plan to apply FSC labels on product) | |
| COC 5.10: FME shall have a secure system in place for labeling products that ensures the following (40-201, 1.2): a) Only those products originating from forests covered by the scope of a valid FSC certificate are FSC-labeled; b) Only those products that meet the eligibility requirements per CoC standard requirements for FSC-labeling are FSC-labeled; c) Only the FSC Pure label is used. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: | |
| When applicable to the FME's on-product labeling, the criteria below shall be met: | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findings: | |
| COC 5.11: FME shall not use the FSC labels together with the logos or names of other forestry verification schemes (40-201, 1.11, 1.13). | |
| COC 5.12: FME shall not use the FSC labels together with claims referring to the sustainability of the forest from which the wood is sourced (40-201, 1.11, 1.13). | |
| COC 5.13: The FSC label shall be applied to products in such a way that it is clearly visible (40-201, 1.14). | |

APPENDIX V: Group Certification Conformance (confidential)

Quality System Requirements

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| 1.0 General Requirements | Complete |
| 1.1 The Group entity is an independent legal entity or an individual acting as a legal entity. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: The NSLFFPA is a non-profit entity registered in the Province of Nova Scotia | |
| 1.2 The Group entity is in compliance with relevant legal obligations, as registration and payment of applicable fees and taxes. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: Evidence was provided that indicates the requirement is satisfied. | |
| 1.3 The Group entity has a written public policy of commitment to the FSC Principles and Criteria. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: A public policy commitment to FSC Principles has been prepared and all landowners within the pool sign a statement endorsing the commitment to FSC. | |
| 1.4 The Group entity has defined training needs and has implemented training activities and/or communication strategies relevant to the implementation of the applicable FSC standards. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: Training programs are provided annually where standards are discussed. | |
| 2.0 Responsibilities | |
| 2.1 The Group entity has clearly defined and documented the division of responsibilities between the Group entity and the Group members in relation to forest management activities (for example with respect to management planning, monitoring, harvesting, quality control, marketing, timber sale, etc). | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>NOTE: The actual division of responsibilities may differ greatly between different group certification schemes. Responsibilities regarding compliance to the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard may be divided between the Group entity and Group members in order to take into account of a landscape approach.</i> | |
| Comments: The Policy Document and SOP document outline the roles and responsibilities of NSLFFPA and its individual members. | |

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| 2.2 The Group entity has appointed a management representative as having overall responsibility and authority for the Group entity's compliance with all applicable requirements of this standard. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: The Executive Director has overall responsibility for the management and functioning of NSLFFPA. Program Foresters ensure compliance to standard requirements in the field and in the day-to-day functioning of NSLFFPA. | |
| 2.3 Group entity staff and Group members can demonstrate knowledge of the Group's procedures and the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: Interviews with landowners during the site visits and with staff indicated a good knowledge of NSLFFPAs procedures and FSC standard requirements. | |
| 3.0 Group Entity Procedures | |
| <p>3.1 The Group entity has established, implemented and maintained written procedures for Group membership covering all applicable requirements of this standard, according to scale and complexity of the group including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Organizational structure; II. Responsibilities of the Group entity and the Group members including main activities to fulfill such responsibilities (i.e. Development of management plans, sales and marketing of FSC products, harvesting, planting, monitoring, etc); III. Rules regarding eligibility for membership to the Group; IV. Rules regarding withdrawal/ suspension of members from the Group; V. Clear description of the process to fulfill any corrective action requests issued internally and by the certification body including timelines and implications if any of the corrective actions are not complied with; VI. Documented procedures for the inclusion of new Group members; VII. Complaints procedure for Group members. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: The Policy and SOP documents provide written procedures for membership and associated responsibilities of NSLFFPA and individual members. | |
| 3.2 The Group entity's procedures are sufficient to establish an efficient internal control system ensuring that all members are fulfilling applicable requirements. | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: Observation 02/11: While there was no evidence of damage, a requirement exists to monitor active woodlands operations in order mitigate negative impacts when operations are in progress. | |
| 3.3 The Group entity has defined the personnel responsible for each procedure together | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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| with the qualifications or training measures required for its implementation. | |
| Comments: The Policy Document details the roles and responsibilities for each staff position. | |
| <p>3.4 The Group entity or SmartWood (upon request of Group entity and at the Group entities expense) has evaluate every applicant for membership of the Group and ensure that there are no major nonconformities with applicable requirements of the Forest Stewardship Standard, and with any additional requirements for membership of the Group, prior to being granted membership of the Group.</p> <p><i>NOTE: for applicants complying with SLIMF eligibility criteria for size, the initial evaluation may be done through a desk audit.</i></p> | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: Each applicant for membership in NSLFFPA completes a verbal interview with NSLFFPA Program Foresters to determine their eligibility for membership in the Group. A consent form must be signed by the applicant indicating there agreement to conform to the FSC Standard and other requirements of the Group. | |
| 4.0 Group Member Informed Consent | |
| <p>4.1 The Group entity has provided each Group member with documentation, or access to documentation, specifying the relevant terms and conditions of Group membership. The documentation shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Access to a copy of the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard; II. Explanation of the certification body's process; III. Explanation of the certification body's, and FSC's rights to access the Group members' forests and documentation for the purposes of evaluation and monitoring; IV. Explanation of the certification body's, and FSC's requirements with respect to publication of information; V. Explanation of any obligations with respect to Group membership, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. maintenance of information for monitoring purposes; b. use of systems for tracking and tracing of forest products; c. requirement to conform with conditions or corrective action requests issued by the certification body and the group entity d. any special requirements for Group members related to marketing or sales of products within and outside of the certificate; e. other obligations of Group membership; and f. explanation of any costs associated with Group membership. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Comments: Group members are provided with hard copies of documents and/or internet links for materials relevant to group membership. FSC requirements are also explained in a verbal interview and each member signs a consent form acknowledging the requirements of membership in the pool.

4.2 A consent declaration or equivalent is available between the Group Entity and each Group member or the member's representative who voluntarily wishes to participate in the Group. This consent declaration shall:

- I. include a commitment to comply with all applicable certification requirements;
- II. acknowledge and agree to the obligations and responsibilities of the Group entity;
- III. acknowledge and agree to the obligations and responsibilities of Group membership;
- IV. agree to membership of the scheme, *and*
- V. authorize the Group entity to be the primary contact for certification and to apply for certification on the member's behalf.

Yes

NOTE: A consent declaration does not have to be an individual document. It can be part of a contract or any other document (e.g. meeting minutes) that specifies the agreed relationship between the Group member and the Group entity.

Comments: Each participating group member is vetted through a verbal interview and signs a consent form.

5.0 Group Records

5.1 The group entity maintains complete and up-to-date records covering all applicable requirements of this standard. These shall include:

- I. List of names and contact details of Group members, together with dates of entering and leaving the Group scheme, reason for leaving, and the type of forest ownership per member;
- II. Any records of training provided to staff or Group members, relevant to the implementation of this standard or the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard;
- III. A map or supporting documentation describing or showing the location of the member's forest properties;
- IV. Evidence of consent of all Group members;
- V. Documentation and records regarding recommended practices for forest management (i.e. silvicultural systems);
- VI. Records demonstrating the implementation of any internal control or monitoring systems. Such records shall include records of internal inspections, non-

Yes

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| <p>compliances identified in such inspections, actions taken to correct any such non-compliance;</p> <p>VII. Records of the estimated annual overall FSC production and annual FSC sales of the Group.</p> <p><i>NOTE: The amount of data that is maintained centrally by the Group entity may vary from case to case. In order to reduce costs of evaluation by the certification body, and subsequent monitoring by FSC, data should be stored centrally wherever possible.</i></p> | |
| <p>Comments: All required documents are maintained at the NSLFPPA office in Port Hawkesbury.</p> | |
| <p>5.2 Group records are retained for at least five (5) years.</p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>Comments: Records are retained for a 5 year period.</p> | |
| <p>5.3 Group entity does not issue any kind of certificates or declarations to their group members that could be confused with FSC certificates.</p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>Comments: No certificates or declarations that can be confused with FSC certificates are issued.</p> | |

Group Features

6.0 Group Size

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| <p>6.1 The Group entity has sufficient human and technical resources to manage and control the Group in line with the requirements of this standard.</p> <p><i>NOTE: The number of Group members, their individual size and the total area will influence the evaluation intensity applied by the certification body in their annual audits.</i></p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>Comments: The issue of the capacity of NSLFFPA to effectively and efficiently function has been raised in past audit reports. Two program foresters have been hired and NSLFFPA makes effective use of consultants for the delivery of management plans. At this time staffing is not a concern for the functioning of NSLFFPA.</p> | |
| <p>6.2 The Group entity procedures specify the maximum number of members that can be supported by the management system and the human and technical capacities of the Group entity.</p> | <p>NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>Comments: The policy document does not specify the maximum membership of the Group. CAR 12/11 is issued.</p> <p>CAR 12/11: NSLFFPA shall specify in its procedures documentation the maximum number of members that can be supported by its management system and human and technical capabilities.</p> | |

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| 7.0 Multinational Groups | |
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| 7.1 Group scheme is only applied to a national group which is covered by the same Forest Stewardship Standard. | N/A |
| Comments: | |
| 7.2 If answer is “No” to 7.1 the Group entity has requested formal approval by FSC IC through SmartWood to allow certification of such a group scheme. | N/A |
| Comments: | |

Internal Monitoring

| 8.0 Monitoring Requirements | |
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| 8.1 The Group entity has implemented a documented monitoring and control system that includes at least the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Written description of the monitoring and control system; II. Regular (at least annual) monitoring visits to a sample of Group members to confirm continued compliance with all the requirements of the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard, and with any additional requirements for membership of the Group. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: There is a documented monitoring program and inspections are conducted annually on member properties to ensure compliance with the Standard. | |
| 8.2 The Group entity has defined criteria to be monitored at each internal audit and according to the group characteristics, risk factors and local circumstances. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: Monitoring check sheets have been developed and are used to support monitoring activities. | |
| 8.3. The minimum sample to be visited annually for internal monitoring has been determined as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Type I Groups with mixed responsibilities (see FSC-STD-30-005 v-1 section D Terms and definitions) Groups or sub-groups with mixed responsibilities shall apply a <i>minimum</i> sampling of $X = \sqrt{y}$ for ‘normal’ FMUs and $X = 0.6 * \sqrt{y}$ for FMUs < 1,000 ha. Sampling shall be increased if HCVs are threatened or land tenure or use right disputes are | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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| <p>pending within the group.</p> <p>b) Type II Resource Manager Groups (see FSC-STD-30-005 v-1 section D Terms and definitions)</p> <p>Group entities who also operate as resource managers may define the required internal sampling intensity at their own discretion for the forest properties they are managing, independent of their size and ownership (the minimum numbers as defined above do not apply here).</p> <p><i>NOTE: for the purpose of sampling, FMUs < 1,000 ha and managed by the same managerial body may be combined into a 'resource management unit' (RMU) according to the proposal made in FSC-STD-20-007 Annex 1.</i></p> | |
| <p>Comments: A sampling standard has been determined for monitoring based on the number of properties in the pool and the level of forest management activities occurring.</p> | |
| <p>8.4 – 8.6 FSC-STD-30-005 recommendations for internal monitoring.</p> | |
| <p>8.4 For monitoring purposes the Group entity has used the same stratification into sets of 'like' FMUs as defined by SmartWood in their evaluation.</p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>Comments: All group members are subject to periodic monitoring by NSLFFPA.</p> | |
| <p>8.5 The Group entity has visit different members in their annual monitoring than the ones selected for evaluation by SmartWood, unless pending corrective actions, complaints or risk factors are requiring a revisit of the same units.</p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>Comments: Different individuals are selected for monitoring on the basis of activities that are occurring on the member properties.</p> | |
| <p>8.6 In the selection process of members to be visited, the Group entity has include random selection techniques.</p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>Comments:</p> | |
| <p>8.7 The Group entity issues corrective action requests to address non-compliances identified during their visits and monitor their implementation.</p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>Comments: The Policy Document and SOPs describe the procedures for the issuance of corrective action requests. To date no CARs have been issued.</p> | |
| <p>8.8 Additional monitoring visits are scheduled when potential problems arise or the Group entity receives information from stakeholders about alleged violations of the FSC requirements by Group members.</p> | <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>Comments: Policy documents indicate that additional monitoring will occur where problems are apparent</p> | |

including follow-up to see how corrective action requests are addressed.

Chain of Custody

9.0 Sales of forest products and use of the FSC trademark

9.1 The Group entity has documented and implemented a system for tracking and tracing of forest products produced by the Group members which are supposed to be sold as FSC certified.

Yes

Comments: A documented and implemented system is in place which is based on the assignment of a unique property identification number for each member woodlot. Material received at NewPage is tracked on the basis of the PID and reports of mill receipts are provided by NewPage to NSLFFPA.

9.2 For the purpose of ensuring that non certified material is not being mixed with FSC certified material, FSC products are only sold in accordance to a sales protocol agreed by the Group members and the Group entity.

Yes

Comments: Wood is supplied exclusively to NewPage. No outside wood is handled.

9.3 The Group entity ensures that all invoices for sales of FSC certified material are issued with the required information (see *FSC-STD-40-004 V2-0* Clause 6.1.1) and are filed by the group members.

Yes

Comments: The PIDs link all sales to individual COC subcodes.

9.4 The Group entity ensures that all uses of the FSC Trademark are approved by SmartWood in advance.

Yes

Comments: Wood is supplied exclusively to NewPage. No outside wood is handled. Trademark procedures including a provision for SmartWood approval for use are included in the policy documentation.

Notes:

Certified Pool Participation List

- 1. Total # members in the certified pool: 92**
- 2. Total area in Current Pool: 9837.98 ha**

Non-pool forestlands

- 1. Total number of forestlands for which the candidate group manager has some management responsibilities or ownership: 0**
- 2. Total area of that those forestlands represent (ha): 0**

APPENDIX VI: List of all visited sites (confidential)

| Area | Auditors | Type of site / short description of site |
|----------------------|----------------|---|
| John Mansley Woodlot | Byford/Beckley | Sanitation harvest to control bark beetle infestation. Other woodlot management activities were also inspected (i.e. roads, plantations etc). |
| Jeff Lee Woodlot | Byford/Beckley | Sanitation harvest to control bark beetle infestation. Other woodlot management activities were also inspected. |
| George Post | Byford/Beckley | Sanitation harvest to control bark beetle infestation. Selection harvest of hard maple. Other woodlot forest management activities were also inspected. |
| Ken MacRury | Byford | Strip cutting and replanting. |
| Sandy Macleod | Byford | Sanitation harvest to control bark beetle infestation. Other woodlot management activities were also inspected. |

APPENDIX VII: SLIMF Eligibility Form (confidential)

This application is for SLIMF eligibility for:

- Individual Landowner (Small Size) - proceed to section A
- Individual Landowner (low intensity) - proceed to section B
- Group Manager Proceed to Section 3

A. INDIVIDUAL: SIZE ELIGIBILITY

A. Total property size (proposed for certification)

B. Property Details

- Single property
- Multiple properties (Note: One ownership. For multiple ownerships see c)
Number of properties _____, Please list and describe in table below:

| Property name | Size | Location |
|---------------|------|----------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

B. INDIVIDUAL: Low Intensity Eligibility:

- Harvest intensity is less than 20% MAI and annual harvest less than 5000 m³
 - Copy of management plan describing growth and yield calculations submitted with application (Required)
 - Harvest Less Than 5000 m³/yr
 - Harvest Records for last five years

Basis of Growth/harvest determination

a. Land Base

Acres/HA in property _____
 Acres/HA proposed for certification _____
 Acres/HA of productive Land _____
 Acres/HA in Conservation _____

b. Inventory, Growth and Yield

Estimated Standing Volume _____
 Measured Annual Growth _____ (m³ or mbf/yr)
 Calculated AAC _____
 Inventory system and sampling method, (provide description)
 Date established _____
 Last re-measure _____
 Comments: _____

c. Harvest Interval and Intensity

- Annual
- Every 2-5 years
- Every 6-10 years
- Every 10-15 years
- Other (Describe) _____
- Date Last Harvest _____
- Volume last harvest _____
- Date Next Scheduled Harvest _____
- Years under Management _____
- Volume Harvested during last interval _____.

C. GROUP: SLIMF eligibility for Group Managers

Note: All members must meet Size or low intensity requirements above
Number of FMUs in the group 92
Total forest area to be certified under group 9,837.98 ha

List Properties Below (note individual landowner may include different FMUs):

See Appendix V of this report.

D. SMARTWOOD SLIMF DETERMINATION:

| | | | |
|---|------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Operation Qualifies for SLIMF status | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If no, state reason: | | | |
| SW Approval: | Krista West | | |
| Approval Date | November 5, 2010 | | |
| Comments/next steps: | | | |