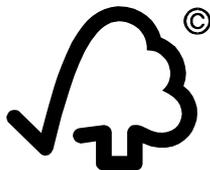




SmartWood Headquarters
65 Millet St. Suite 201
Richmond, VT 05477 USA
Tel: 802-434-5491
Fax: 802-434-3116
www.rainforest-alliance.org/forestry

Audit Managed by:



FSC
ACCREDITED
FSC-ACC-004

© 1996 Forest Stewardship Council A.C.

FM-06 January 2011



**Rainforest
Alliance**

SmartWood Program

Forest Management
2012 Annual audit
Report for:

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

Report Finalized: October 5th, 2011
Audit Dates: June 19 – 22, 2011
Audit Team: Robert Arnup

Certificate code(s): SW-FM/COC-001753
Certificate issued: January 23, 2011
Certificate expiration: January 22, 2016

Organization Contact: Kingsley Brown
Address: 609 Church Street
Unit 2, Port Hawkesbury,
NS, B9A 2X4

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2.	AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESULTS	3
2.1.	AUDIT CONCLUSION	3
2.2.	CHANGES IN FMES' FOREST MANAGEMENT AND ASSOCIATED EFFECTS ON CONFORMANCE TO STANDARD REQUIREMENTS	3
2.3.	STAKEHOLDER ISSUES (<i>COMPLAINTS/DISPUTES RAISED BY STAKEHOLDERS TO FME OR SMARTWOOD SINCE PREVIOUS EVALUATION</i>).....	4
2.4.	CONFORMANCE WITH APPLICABLE NON CONFORMITY REPORTS	4
2.5.	NEW CORRECTIVE ACTIONS ISSUED AS A RESULT OF THIS AUDIT	13
2.6.	AUDIT OBSERVATIONS.....	14
2.7.	NOTES FROM PAST AUDITS	14
2.8.	NOTES FOR FUTURE AUDIT TEAMS	15
3.	AUDIT PROCESS.....	16
3.1.	AUDITORS AND QUALIFICATIONS.....	16
3.2.	AUDIT SCHEDULE.....	16
3.3.	SAMPLING METHODOLOGY.....	17
3.4.	STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PROCESS	18
3.5.	CHANGES TO CERTIFICATION STANDARDS	18
3.6.	REVIEW OF FME DOCUMENTATION AND REQUIRED RECORDS	18
	APPENDIX I: FSC Annual Audit Reporting Form	20
	APPENDIX II: List of visited sites (confidential).....	23
	APPENDIX III: List of stakeholders consulted (confidential)	26
	APPENDIX IV: Forest management standard conformance (confidential).....	27
	APPENDIX V: Chain-of-Custody Conformance (confidential).....	31
	APPENDIX VI: SmartWood Database Update Form	36
	APPENDIX VII: Group management conformance checklist <i>FSC-STD-30-005 v1-0</i> (confidential).....	37
	APPENDIX VII-a: Certified Pool Participation List.....	42

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to document annual audit conformance of Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers Association (NSLFFPA), hereafter referred to as Forest Management Enterprise (FME). The report presents the findings of SmartWood auditors who have evaluated company systems and performance against FSC forest management standards and policies. Section 2 of this report provides the audit conclusions and any necessary follow-up actions by the company through corrective action requests.

SmartWood audit reports include information that will become public information. Sections 1-3 will be posted on SmartWood's website according to FSC requirements. All appendices will remain confidential.

Dispute resolution: If SmartWood clients encounter organizations or individuals having concerns or comments about Rainforest Alliance / SmartWood and our services, these parties are strongly encouraged to contact SmartWood regional or Headquarters offices directly (see contact information on report cover). Formal complaints or concerns should be sent in writing.

2. AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESULTS

2.1. Audit conclusion

Based on Company's conformance with FSC and SmartWood requirements, the audit team makes the following recommendation:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Certification requirements <u>met</u>, certificate maintenance recommended Two minor NCRs issued.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Certification requirements <u>not met</u>:
Additional comments:	
Issues identified as controversial or hard to evaluate.	

2.2. Changes in FMEs' forest management and associated effects on conformance to standard requirements

Since the re-assessment in 2010 there have been no significant changes in the management of NSLFFPA. The number of participating group members rose from 49 members in 2010, to 153 members at the time of the 2011 annual audit. The rise in numbers is allowable within the scope of the certificate.

Two upcoming provincial announcements may affect the Association. First is an Energy Policy (through the Ministry of Energy and Department of Natural Resources) that will address regulations on co-generation biomass projects. NewPage is in the process of building a co-generation facility and it is expected that certified private lands will be given preference for biomass supply as a means for safeguarding production. Second will be a Stage II Resource Strategy providing recommendations to government on mining, parks, biodiversity and forestry.

Of particular concern to the FME are proposed, and apparently arbitrary, restrictions on the amount of clearcutting that will be permitted in the province. The FME is concerned that use of the clearcut system may be restricted notwithstanding the silvicultural need, for example, in salvage harvest operations on insect damaged conifer stands.

During the spring and early summer of 2011 higher than normal rainfall was experienced throughout the area. This led to wet soil conditions that were more susceptible than usual to rutting from machine operations. Soil damage was experienced on the lands of several group members who were harvesting and forwarding wood at the time.

2.3. Stakeholder issues *(complaints/disputes raised by stakeholders to FME or SmartWood since previous evaluation)*

One group member expressed concern that there was a lack of information provided to members. He did not feel like he was part of the group. He would like to see regular newsletters and / or meetings for members to share ideas and learn about issues. No other complaints were received.

In response to this complaint, the FME developed a user mailing list in order to enable more frequent communication. In May 2011, a letter was sent out to all group members to provide an update on the program. The FME also committed to providing more frequent communications with its members. The possibility of having more frequent member meetings focused on forest management issues rather than on administrative issues was discussed with members. Finally, the FME developed a database to track each complaint, the action(s) taken in response, and the current status.

2.4. Conformance with applicable non conformity reports

The section below describes the activities of the certificate holder to address each applicable non conformity report (NCR) issued during previous evaluations. For each NCR a finding is presented along with a description of its current status using the following categories. Failure to meet NCRs will result in nonconformances being upgraded from minor to major status with conformance required within 3 months with risk of suspension or termination of the SmartWood certificate if Major NCRs are not met. The following classification is used to indicate the status of the NCR:

Status Categories	Explanation
Closed	Operation has successfully met the NCR.
Open	Operation has either <u>not met</u> or has <u>partially met</u> the NCR.

Check if N/A (there are no open NCRs to review)

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

Major	Minor x	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.
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:		<p>The FME has developed and implemented procedures for preventing and reporting illegal activities that is documented in the standard operating procedures (SOPs) under sections 1.5.1 and 1.5.2. These procedures were developed through discussions with a local Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Enforcement Officer, and by reviewing an information directive from the New Brunswick Federation of Woodlot Owners.</p> <p>These procedures were provided to all group members through a program update letter. At the time of the audit, there had been no reports of illegal harvesting received by the FME.</p> <p>The FME has also developed a system for documenting illegal harvesting reports and related evidence in their program database. Illegal harvesting is now one of the reporting options in the incidents and complaints database. This database also includes records for open or closed status, actions to be taken, and the person(s) responsible.</p> <p>This CAR is closed.</p>
CAR Status:		CLOSED
Follow-up Actions (if app.):		None

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:		There are five bands on Cape Breton Island, all of which are represented by the Unima'ki Institute for Natural Resources (UINR), a natural resources organization with a Forestry department. The FME's communication with these 5 bands is through the program

	<p>forester for UINR. UINR is in process of developing maps and a database of First Nations cultural values, which will be shared with the FME. Values will be incorporated into management plans for member woodlots and this will result in, which will permit these values being protected as appropriate. The UINR representative indicated that the FME was very open and straightforward to deal with, and that they were very comfortable with the relationship that had been established.</p> <p>The remaining 2 bands are Pictou Landing First Nation (PLFN) and Paq'tnkek. The FME has extended offers of co-operation to Paq'tnkek, but at the time of the audit they had not responded. They have told the FME that they do not have a lot of interest in forestry. There are no known issues with the FME. PLFN has a community-based woodlot within their Reserve Lands and has been certified under the FSC Maritime Standard since 1999. In the fall of 2010, their forest manager requested to join the NSLFFPA group program. This was approved and their membership was finalized in January, 2011.</p> <p>Since the FME has made appropriate contacts, and has established an appropriate, ongoing relationship with the seven First Nations relevant to their area, this CAR is closed.</p>
CAR Status:	CLOSED
Follow-up Actions (if app.):	None

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	
<p>Corrective Action Request: NSLFFPA shall revise their procedures to include:</p> <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:	<p>The FME has adopted a policy (section 3.3.2 in the Policies and Procedures Manual) for contacting adjacent landowners. The option is given to the member to do so themselves, or to allow an FME representative to do so. This is an appropriate policy in light of the social and cultural situation in Nova Scotia regarding neighbor relationships. Smartwood reviewed evidence that these contacts had been made for harvest operations on member woodlots in the spring of 2011.</p> <p>This CAR is closed.</p>	
CAR Status:	CLOSED	
Follow-up Actions (if app.):	None	

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:		<p>The FME has made several changes to its management planning approach to ensure that it is developing and following management plans that reflect the natural range of variability found in eastern Nova Scotia. Range of natural variability in eastern Nova Scotia largely refers to the condition of a forest area relative to an appropriate Acadian forest condition for that area. For most areas forest conditions seen today are very different from the original Acadian Forest condition due to the long management history in the area.</p> <p>The Ecological Land Classification data developed by DNR is now available and is appropriate for use at the scale of management planning for member woodlots. As part of this work, DNR has developed data on the disturbance regimes, and the climax forest types to be expected in each ecosection. Using this data, the FME has developed a layer named 'ELC'. This layer identifies the disturbance regimes and potential climax species association for the stand conditions present in each woodlot. This information is then used to guide the development of forest management prescriptions. At the time of the 2011 audit the use of this information had been implemented. Smartwood reviewed examples of the inclusion of this information into management plans developed by the FME for group members.</p> <p>This CAR is closed.</p>
CAR Status:		CLOSED
Follow-up Actions (if app.):		None

CAR 05/11		Reference to Standard: Criteria and indicator 6.6.1
Non-conformance		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.
Major	Minor x	
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:		The integrated pest management (IPM) program is described in detail in appendix XV of the management plan template. A

	<p>summary of the treatment recommendation by area over time for each individual woodlot is contained in the plan's objectives table, which is included in the public summary document for each management plan. Any plan written prior to July, 2010 would not have this objectives table but these will be updated at the time of the 5 year re-assessment.</p> <p>The FME has also produced a summary of recommended treatments for the entire certified area, which is available to the public at the FME's office upon request, and is to be updated annually. These summaries will also be provided to group members on an annual basis, or more often for some elements, of the IPM program, as appropriate.</p> <p>This CAR is closed.</p>
CAR Status:	CLOSED
Follow-up Actions (if app.):	None

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:	<p>At the time of the 2011 audit, strategies for management plan implementation were being documented in all new forest management plans and included in the public summaries. The public summary includes the introductory page for each management plan, which contains the basic woodlot descriptions, commitment to FSC Maritimes Standard Principles and Criteria and the strategy and implementation of stated objectives for the woodlot. The implementation section is a summary of all applicable treatments designed to meet the specific objective by area over time. The FME has designed a new objectives table, which is also included in the public summary. This table lists the objectives, strategies, and silvicultural prescriptions for the stands to be treated. The above has been in effect for all new plans as of July, 2010.</p> <p>This CAR is closed.</p>	
CAR Status:	CLOSED	
Follow-up Actions (if app.):	None	

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

Major	Minor x	available harvest volumes (e.g. pests and/or pathogens) are applied in the determination of the annual allowable cut.
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:		<p>Within all new management plans, the FME now includes reduction factors based on risk severity (high, medium, low). These are applied on a stand by stand basis to demonstrate potential merchantable volume losses if the recommended treatment for harvesting activities is not followed over the associated timeline. Section 11 of each plan also includes an IPM reduction table, if applicable, specifying the risk severity on reduction in available merchantable volume over time by stand. A summary of the treatment recommendation by area over time for each individual woodlot is contained in the plan's objectives table which is included in the public summary. The auditor reviewed examples of these analyses, as included in members' management plans, and determined that this is an appropriate approach considering the scale and scope of the member woodlot operations.</p> <p>This CAR is closed.</p>
CAR Status:		CLOSED
Follow-up Actions (if app.):		None

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:		<p>The FME has committed to assessing the growth, harvest rates, and standing volume of woodlots that are part of its FSC program. This information will be examined in relation to changes over time, as well as compared to woodlots that are not part of the program to determine whether there are any trends that can be found. In part the provincial permanent sample plot (PSP) information will be used for this analysis. This system of randomly sampled, permanent plots has been in place since 1965, and is very useful for examining long-term trends in tree growth.</p> <p>There are approximately 20 PSP's located on member woodlots and these are documented in a GIS layer. Plots are re-measured every 5 years. Growth rates are calculated based on annualized 5 year observed growth, and converted to a hectare equivalent at a plot level. Average net growth rates are then calculated for various landbase categories. It should be noted that plots are maintained and measured even after they have been harvested. Volume loss</p>

	<p>due to both mortality and harvest can thus be included in the calculation of net growth, which includes mortality, ingrowth and losses to harvesting.</p> <p>In addition to the provincial PSPs, a weekly automated report is now being sent to the FME from NewPage, Port Hawkesbury, which details any deliveries to the mill from a NSLFFPA member woodlot. This will in future provide information for the analysis of forest growth by providing yield data by species which can be attributed to a specific woodlot, harvest area, and harvest year.</p> <p>The FME has completed an initial analysis of the above information. This was reviewed by the auditor and found to be adequate.</p> <p>This CAR is closed.</p>
CAR Status:	CLOSED
Follow-up Actions (if app.):	None

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:		<p>The FME implements active and post harvest, silviculture and road operations monitoring assessments to observe and ensure best forest management practices, health and safety practices and adherence to applicable regulations. Landowners are required to inform the group managers upon planned activity in order to schedule on-site monitoring assessments. A weekly automated report is sent out from NewPage, Port Hawkesbury which details deliveries to the mill from a NSLFFPA member woodlot, triggering an internal monitoring review in the event the landowner has not made contact with a NSLFFPA representative. Each individual assessment is catalogued and tracked in the 'Monitoring Tracker' for identification of CARs, observations and a summary of the group totals. When workers are found on-site, health and safety inspections are also performed and tracked in the 'Health and Safety Tracker'. At the time of the 2011 audit, FME program foresters had developed a database which tracks all the various monitoring variables listed above.</p> <p>The FME intends to provide group members with a summary of silviculture activities, and the results of monitoring carried out on woodlots within the program on an annual basis. Smartwood reviewed a summary of monitoring activities for the year 2010 which had been prepared by the FME. This summary is also available to the public at NSLFFPA's office in Port Hawkesbury.</p>

	This CAR is closed.
CAR Status:	CLOSED
Follow-up Actions (if app.):	None

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:		<p>The FME conducts HCV Assessments for each member woodlot according to the requirements within the FSC Maritimes Standard (2008) as outlined in Principle 9 and Appendix F. Many high conservation values identified in Nova Scotia have existing public spatial databases which provide the plan writers advanced indicators prior to going to the field. Unless otherwise previously protected, field assessments are conducted to substantiate the HCVs, and, if necessary, a third party deemed to be an authority on the subject is consulted for a final assessment.</p> <p>Examples of publically available databases containing information about potential HCVs include DNR's Restricted and Limited Use Land (RLUL) database, Significant Ecosites database, Old Growth Forest Score Sheet and Old Growth Forest Layer, Wildlife Habitat Layer, and the Significant Species and Habitats ('Sighab') database.</p> <p>Specific strategies for the maintenance and / or enhancement of any identified HCVF areas are described in each respective management plan by stand. Monitoring strategies include periodic sampling and follow up communication and inspection when reports of harvesting activity occur within the same woodlot as an HCVF area, especially for stands adjacent to the value. At the time of the 2011 audit, the public summaries for management plans included a tabular list of HCVs, the area involved, and a brief description of the management strategy. The FME has also compiled a list and summary of all identified HCVs within member woodlots. The summary documents described above meet the requirements for the Maritimes SLIMF Standard, and are available to the public at the FME's office at Port Hawkesbury.</p> <p>This CAR is closed.</p>
CAR Status:		CLOSED
Follow-up Actions (if app.):		None

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:		<p>The FME's methodology for the assessment of plantation area is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planted areas within a NSLFFPA member woodlot are assessed and categorized as 'mixed plantation' or 'plantation' (also referred to as 'monoculture plantation') depending upon the structure and species composition within the planted area. If deemed a mixed plantation the area is considered certifiable and included in the total certified area while tracking the total mixed plantation area in 'Forest Breakdown'. If categorized as a monoculture plantation, the area is referred to the total certifiable area of the woodlot (naturally forested area) and deemed non-certifiable if it is greater than 10% of the naturally forested area. If the area amounts to less than 10% of the total naturally forested area, the plantation is included as certified land and must have restoration objectives associated with it, also outlined in section 10 of the individual management plan. Plantation area (certified and not certified) is also tracked in the Forest Breakdown. Upon re-assessment (5 year intervals), any 'plantation' areas may be re-evaluated to determine current status with resulting changes adjusted in the individual plan and the 'Forest Breakdown'. <p>Since by using this method for assessment, planted areas meeting the definition of "Plantations" as per the Maritimes SLIMF Standard are excluded from the certified area for member properties, the requirements for this indicator have been met and this CAR is closed.</p>
CAR Status:		CLOSED
Follow-up Actions (if app.):		None

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:	<p>In its Policy Manual, the FME states: “to ensure that the integrity of the program is not compromised, care must be taken to ensure that the program does not expand beyond its available resources. Since resources available to the program are currently in flux, it is difficult to prescribe a specific maximum size. Instead, a more flexible approach needs to be taken.”</p> <p>The FSC Program Coordinator is responsible for reviewing the program size, rate of growth and current resources with program staff on an annual basis to ensure that program responsibilities can be met effectively with current resources. The model ‘FSC Program Forecast’ has been developed to assist in this process. The model quantifies current resources and associated program size and growth. It can also be used to forecast program size under different resourcing scenarios. Smartwood reviewed projections made with the above model with the FME’s current resources, which indicated that the current program and resources can sustain considerable growth.</p> <p>The auditor finds that given the circumstances of funding and resources available to the FME, this is a reasonable approach to determining the management system’s capacity in terms of group membership, especially given the commitment to review this annually, or more often if necessary.</p> <p>This CAR is closed.</p>
CAR Status:	CLOSED
Follow-up Actions (if app.):	None

2.5. New corrective actions issued as a result of this audit

NCR#:	12/01	NC Classification:	Minor
Standard & Requirement:	FSC-STD-CAN-Maritimes-SLIMF-2008 Indicator 6.3.5		
Report Section:	Appendix IV		
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:			
<p>Due to the unusually wet spring weather in 2011, there was a greater risk than usual of site damage due to rutting from machine operations on sensitive soils. Four of the nine properties visited in the field by the auditor had incurred significant site damage due to rutting from the forwarding operations. At the time of the site visit, one CAR had been issued by NSLFFPA to a group member in regard to site damage (rutting) incurred in the harvest operation during forwarding. Rutting damage was also observed on three other properties visited in the field by the auditor, and NSLFFPA staff indicated they would be issuing CARs to these group members as well. In addition, the FME expressed their intent to check for rutting damage on all other properties that had operations during the spring of 2011.</p>			
Corrective Action Request:	<p>NSLFFPA shall implement corrective actions to demonstrate conformance with the requirement(s) referenced above. Note: Effective corrective actions focus on addressing the specific occurrence described in evidence above, as well as the root cause to eliminate and prevent recurrence of the non-conformance.</p>		
Timeline for Conformance:	By the second annual audit.		

Evidence Provided by Organization:	PENDING
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	PENDING
NCR Status:	OPEN
Comments (optional):	

NCR#:	02/12	NC Classification:	Minor
Standard & Requirement:	FSC-STD-CAN-Maritimes-SLIMF-2008; Indicator 6.5.4		
Report Section:	Appendix IV		
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:			
On two of the nine properties visited by the auditor in the field, there were issues with environmental impacts at crossings of ephemeral streams. In both cases, the contractor had failed to implement best management practices for the protection of water quality. This NCR is intended to focus on the prevention of future occurrences of undue impacts at water crossing locations on member properties.			
Corrective Action Request:	NSLFFPA shall implement corrective actions to demonstrate conformance with the requirement(s) referenced above. Note: Effective corrective actions focus on addressing the specific occurrence described in evidence above, as well as the root cause to eliminate and prevent recurrence of the non-conformance.		
Timeline for Conformance:	Prior to the second annual audit.		
Evidence Provided by Organization:	PENDING		
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	PENDING		
NCR Status:	OPEN		
Comments (optional):			

2.6. Audit observations

Observations are very minor problems or the early stages of a problem which does not of itself constitute a non-conformance, but which the auditor considers may lead to a future non-conformance 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 NCR in the future (or a pre-condition or condition during a 5 year re-assessment).

No observations have been issued.

2.7. Notes from past audits

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed	<input type="checkbox"/> Followed-up but still open	<input type="checkbox"/> Not followed-up this year
Comments Smartwood reviewed records indicating that NSLFFPA was fully up to date with regard to payment of all applicable taxes and office rent, and had submitted the appropriate paperwork to the government to maintain its not-for-profit status for the year 2011.		

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Followed-up but still open	<input type="checkbox"/> Not followed-up this year
Comments No public meetings were sponsored by the FME since the last annual audit. Smartwood reviewed correspondence with group members, and public summary documents, and found these to be in conformance with requirements. Public notices should be reviewed for the next (2013) annual audit.		

2.8. 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 01/12	Reference Standard and Requirement: FSC-STD-CAN-Maritimes-SLIMF-2008 – Indicator 8.1.1	
Note for Future Annual Audits: Due to the unusually wet spring weather in 2011, there was a greater risk than usual of site damage due to rutting from machine operations on sensitive soils. At the time of the site visit, one CAR had been issued by NSLFFPA to a group member in regard to site damage (rutting) incurred in the harvest operation during forwarding. Rutting damage was also observed on three other properties visited in the field by the auditor, and NSLFFPA staff indicated they would be issuing CARs to these group members as well. In addition, the FME expressed their intent to check for rutting damage on all other properties which had operations during the spring of 2011.		
The status of these CARs should be checked, including any follow-up monitoring done by the FME, as well as any mitigative actions taken by the group members on the areas where site damage was incurred, and related effectiveness monitoring.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Closed	<input type="checkbox"/> Followed-up but still open	<input type="checkbox"/> Not followed-up this year
Comments		

Note 02/12	Reference Standard and Requirement: FSC-STD-CAN-Maritimes-SLIMF-2008 – Indicator 6.3.1	
<p>Note for Future Annual Audits: The current draft version of the “Nova Scotia Policy Framework for Forestry” indicates that levels of clearcutting in the province would be reduced by one-half. This reduction appears to be arbitrary and not based on any consideration of stand condition or silvicultural need towards Acadian Forest restoration strategies. The status of the Nova Scotia Policy Framework for Forestry should be checked, and its implications for the balance of silvicultural systems that may be implemented on group member properties should be considered.</p>		
<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	
<p>Note for Future Annual Audits: Notices of public meetings, public outreach, etc. should be checked.</p>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Closed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Followed-up but still open	<input type="checkbox"/> Not followed-up this year
Comments		
<p>No public meetings were sponsored by the FME since the last annual audit. Smartwood reviewed correspondence with group members, and public summary documents, and found these to be in conformance with requirements. Public notices should be reviewed for the next (2013) annual audit.</p>		

3. AUDIT PROCESS

3.1. Auditor and qualifications

Auditor Name	Rob Arnup	Auditor role	Lead
Qualifications:	<p>Rob has a B.Sc. in Biology and is an Associate R.P.F. (registered professional forester) for the province of Ontario. He is qualified as a lead auditor for the ISO 14001 environmental standard. Rob is a senior forest ecologist with over 32 years of experience. Twenty-five of these years include extensive experience with environmental assessments. He has participated in 24 Independent Forest Audits and numerous SmartWood FSC audits throughout Ontario, and has focused primarily on forest inventory, silviculture, fire and vegetation ecology, and forest management aspects. Rob has been a team member with 10 FSC audit/assessments conducted by SmartWood.</p>		

3.2. Audit schedule

Date	Location /Main sites	Principal Activities
June 1 to June 18, 2011	Auditor's office	Review background documents and CAR evidence (received from NSLFFPA May 31, 2011)
June 19, 2011	[REDACTED]	Field work

June 20, 2011		Official start-up meeting, interviews with staff, review CAR evidence
June 21, 2011		Field work
June 22, 2011		Field work (a.m.); return to NSLFFPA office, staff interviews related to field work, collect and review additional evidence, closing meeting.
June 22-July 6, 2011	Auditor's office	Stakeholder contacts
July 7 to August 15, 2011	Auditor's office	Draft report writing, review and editing
August 17, 2011	SmartWood offices	Draft report delivered to NSLFFPA
September 8, 2011	SmartWood offices	Comments received from NSLFFPA on draft report
October 5, 2011	SmartWood offices	Report finalized
Total number of person days used for the audit: 10.5 = number of auditors participating 1 X number of days spent in preparation, on site and post site visit follow-up including stakeholder consultation 10.5		

3.3. Sampling methodology

During audit planning the task manager determined that there were 108 FMUs and Resource Management Units (RMUs). This resulted in a site sample size of 7 sites. The task manager and NSLFFPA decided to sample 8 sites in order to accommodate any growth between the time of the calculation and the date of the on-site audit. At the time of the audit there were 153 FMUs. Nine sites were inspected during the site visit.

3.3.1 List of FMUs selected for evaluation

FMU Name	Rationale for Selection
	Recent (2010-11) harvest activity under different silvicultural systems (clearcut and individual tree selection)
	Recent harvest activity (2010-11), CAR issued by NSLFFPA for rutting non-compliance
	Recent harvest activity (2010-11); salvage cut on budworm damaged spruce-fir

[REDACTED]	Recent (2010-11) harvest activity under different silvicultural systems (clearcut and individual tree selection) on three different forest types / ecosites; water crossings on intermittent creeks
[REDACTED]	Recent harvest activity (2010-11); water crossing
[REDACTED]	Recent (2010-11) harvest activity; clearcut and salvage cut on budworm damaged spruce-fir
[REDACTED]	Recent (2010-11) harvest activity
[REDACTED]	Active harvest operation; mostly salvage cut on budworm damaged spruce-fir
[REDACTED]	Recent (2010-11) harvest activity

3.4. Stakeholder consultation process

Stakeholder type (i.e. NGO, government, local inhabitant etc.)	Stakeholders notified (#)	Stakeholders consulted or providing input (#)
NGO	1	1
First Nation	5	1
Forest worker		2
Group member	9	2

3.5. Changes to Certification Standards

Forest stewardship standard used in audit:	FSC-STD-CAN-Maritimes-SLIMF-2008; Standard for Small and Low Intensity Forests
Revisions to the standard since the last audit:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No changes to standard. <input type="checkbox"/> Standard was changed (detail changes below)
Changes in standard:	
Implications for FME:	Conformance to new requirements verified

3.6. Review of FME Documentation and required records

a) All certificate types

Required Records	Reviewed
Complaints received by FME from stakeholders, actions taken, follow up communication	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments: A single complaint was received as discussed in Section 2.3.	
Accident records	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments: There were no accidents reported since the previous annual audit.	
Training records	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:	

Operational plan(s) for next twelve months	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:	
Inventory records	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments: For all site visits (9), inventory records for the woodlots within the relevant management plans were reviewed and verified.	
Harvesting records	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments: Harvest records for the year 2010 and for 2011 up to the date of the site visit were reviewed while on site.	

b) Group Certificates *(delete this table if not a group certificate)*

Required Group Records	Reviewed
Group management system	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:	
Rate of membership change within the group	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:	
Formal communication/written documentation sent to members by the group entity during the audit period	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:	
Records of monitoring carried out by the group entity	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:	
Records of any corrective actions issued by the group entity	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments: One CAR related to severe rutting damage on a woodlot had been issued to a member; the auditor visited this site in the field. Several other properties were found to have issues with machine rutting as a result of the unusually wet spring weather in 2011, and the FME indicated their intent to issue CARs to these members as well.	
Updated list of group members	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments: See Appendix VII-a.	

APPENDIX I: FSC Annual Audit Reporting Form

(NOTE: form to be prepared by the client prior to audit, information verified by audit team)

Forest management enterprise information:			
FME legal name:	Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers Association		
FME Certificate Code:	SW-FM/CoC – 001753		
Reporting period	Previous 12 month period	Dates	May 31, 2010 - May 31, 2011

1. Scope Of Certificate			
Type of certificate: group	SLIMF Certificate: Small SLIMF		
New FMUs added since previous evaluation	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Group Certificate: Updated of FMU and group member list provided in Appendix VII-a:			
Multi-FMU Certificate: List of new FMUs added to the certificate scope:			
FMU Name/Description	Area	Forest Type	Location Latitude/Longitude
See attached Appendix VII-a (below)	ha		
	ha		
	ha		

2. FME Information	
<input type="checkbox"/> No changes since previous report (if no changes since previous report leave section blank)	
Forest zone	Temperate
Certified Area under Forest Type	
- Natural	15667 hectares
- Plantation	44.3 hectares
Stream sides and water bodies	Linear Kilometers

4. Forest Area Classification	
<input type="checkbox"/> No changes since previous report (if no changes since previous report leave section blank)	
Total certified area	15711 hectares
Total forest area in scope of certificate	15711 hectares
Ownership Tenure	Private ownership
Management tenure:	
Forest area that is:	
Privately managed	15239.1 hectares
State/Public managed	hectares
Community managed	471.9 hectares
Area of production forests (areas where timber may be harvested)	15605 hectares
Area without <u>any</u> harvesting or management activities: strict forest reserves	106 hectares

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

<input type="checkbox"/> No changes since previous report (if no changes since previous report leave section blank)			
Code	HCV TYPES ¹	Description:	Area
HCV1	Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia).	[REDACTED]	12.55 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.	[REDACTED]	ha
HCV3	Forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems.	[REDACTED]	24.46 ha
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			37.01 ha
Number of sites significant to indigenous people and communities			0

3. Workers

Number of workers including employees, part-time and seasonal workers:		
Total number of workers	4 workers	
- Of total workers listed above	3 Male	1 Female
Number of serious accidents	0	
Number of fatalities	0	

6. Pesticide Use

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>.

FME does not use pesticides. (delete rows below)

APPENDIX II: List of visited sites (confidential)

	FMU or other Location	Compartment/ Area	Site description / Audit Focus and Rationale for selection
1a	[REDACTED]	a	This site is a clearcut of old field white spruce, former agricultural land. [REDACTED] was the harvest contractor. They own a number of properties in the area which they manage for timber production. The harvesting was well done with good retention of residual trees for wildlife, and minimal rutting.
1b	[REDACTED]	b	This site is a selection harvest for tolerant hardwood stand improvement which had been done by the same contractor as on Site 1-a. The stand was a mixed hardwood stand (mostly sugar maple, red maple and yellow birch) The job was well done. There was some rutting in a low spot, but the operator had apparently recognized this and stopped working in this area, and the amount of rutting incurred was minor and in compliance.
2	[REDACTED]		<p>This site is a clearcut harvest in a conifer forest consisting mostly of black spruce and balsam fir. The objectives of the owner were to retain sufficient canopy cover to provide shade cover for future tree planting. The owner's son was managing the contract. NSLFFPA had issued a CAR to the owner since the contractor had created considerable, severe rutting damage along the road which bisects the property longitudinally. In addition there was damage done to a small creek on the property as a result of machine traffic. The contractor was apparently new to Nova Scotia and was very inexperienced. There was an alternate access point for forwarding the wood from the property, but the contractor was unaware of this and had forwarded the wood along a much longer roadway.</p> <p>The quality of the harvest operation itself was acceptable, with reasonable retention of wildlife trees and patches as per the prescription. However, the rutting damage was severe and ran the entire length of the property. The owner did not have a written contract with the contractor, thus the chance of the contractor mitigating the site damage is questionable. A small area adjacent to the highway had been bladed in an attempt to repair some of the rutting, but the equipment had been removed from the site and the forwarding had been completed. The owner was generally pleased with the job and did not seem to be concerned by the rutting damage.</p>
3	[REDACTED]		This site is a salvage harvest of stands of budworm damaged spruce (mostly white spruce mixed with some black spruce). The harvest was done by the landowner

			<p>and by an individual on contract over the previous winter. The forwarding of the wood was contracted and occurred in the spring of 2011 during an extremely wet period. Considerable rutting damage was incurred along the main roadway. The contractor crossed a low, wet, sensitive spot along the access road and the rutting damage in that location was especially severe. The FME indicated that they would be issuing a CAR to the property owner in regard to the rutting.</p>
4			<p>Operations on this property included a clearcut of a mature conifer climax forest, black spruce / white pine mix, a selection harvest in a tolerant hardwood stand, where some hardwood logs and merchantable conifers had been removed, and a clearcut of a balsam fir stand, the latter essentially a salvage harvest since the stand had a high level of cull due to pathogens. The work was done by a very experienced and conscientious contractor, [REDACTED], and this was apparent in the high quality of work observed on the sites. The contractor had done an excellent job with road placement, managed the soft wet spots very well, worked carefully around ephemeral creeks on the area, incurred little or no rutting throughout the harvest areas, and made good use of brush mats and log paths to facilitate the forwarding.</p>
5			<p>The owner's son is the contact for the property, and is also the harvest contractor and wrote the management plan. The harvest was a clearcut of mature conifer stands, and in some locations was a salvage harvest of budworm-damaged stands. The harvest job was good, with good retention of individual wildlife trees and unmerchantable patches of wildlife trees. There was some eastern hemlock within some areas which were retained for wildlife.</p> <p>There was significant rutting damage incurred along the main forwarding trails and roads, and the FME indicated they would be issuing a CAR for this to the landowner. There was a creek on the property which had been crossed using a steel bridge to forward the wood. Soil disturbance from machine operations near the creek had caused soil to slump down to close to the water's edge. In the auditor's opinion, the contractor should have implemented measures to prevent this.</p> <p>Also on this property there was a small plantation (1 ha or less) in an old field which had been pre-commercially thinned. The amount of material removed seemed to be more than was required to promote a growth response. The remaining density was estimated visually to be approximately 350 stems / ha.</p>
6			<p>This property consisted mostly of coniferous stands of balsam fir and spruce interspersed with pockets of</p>

		<p>wetlands and young intolerant species. The harvest operation was a clearcut of softwood stands that had been previously commercially thinned.</p> <p>The contractor was [REDACTED], who is very experienced according to FME staff. He had indeed done a very good job. All aspects of the harvest were in conformance, and there was little or no rutting incurred during the forwarding operation, despite the presence of numerous wet areas and sensitive soils.</p>
7		<p>Harvesting on this property was conducted by clearcutting in mature black spruce and balsam fir stands. The harvest operation was done well, with little rutting within the harvest block, however, there was significant rutting along the entire length of the trails used to forward the wood to roadside. The forwarding had been done in the spring of 2011 during wet spring weather.</p> <p>The FME indicated that they would be issuing a CAR to the property owner in regard to the rutting. The landowner seemed relatively unconcerned about the site damage, referring to it as a normal consequence of forest operations on his property ("cost of doing business").</p>
8		<p>The harvest operation on this property was done by clearcutting to salvage budworm damaged spruce and balsam fir. The contractor was [REDACTED]. The harvest operator whom the auditor spoke with on site knew the property very well. He was aware of all the relevant safety regulations, had the required safety equipment, and was following the management plan prepared by the FME, which he found very useful.</p> <p>The harvest was very well done. Access and the harvest pattern had been pre-planned. There was good retention of wildlife patches and individual trees, and there was very little rutting on the entire site. Odd-sized pieces of wood were being utilized on this site for biomass, which increases the operability of budworm-damaged or overmature conifer stands.</p>
9		<p>The harvest operation on this property was done by clearcutting to salvage budworm damaged spruce and balsam fir. The contractor was the same as the previous woodlot, i.e., [REDACTED]. The harvest was very well done. Access and the harvest pattern had been pre-planned, and there was good retention of wildlife patches and individual trees. There was very little rutting on the entire site.</p>

APPENDIX III: List of stakeholders consulted (confidential)

List of FME Staff Consulted

Name	Title	Contact	Type of Participation
Burchill, Peter	Forester, NSLFFPA	burchill.p@gmail.com ; 902-(902) 304-0815	Interview
Brown, Kingsley	Certification Coordinator, NSLFFPA	nslffpa@ns.sympatico.ca ; (902) 625-3800	Interview
Easthouse, Kari	Forester, NSLFFPA	easthouse.k@gmail.com ; (902) 302-0749	Interview
Stub, Wilma	CEO, NSLFFPA	nslffpa@ns.sympatico.ca ; (902) 625-3800	Interview

List of other Stakeholders Consulted

Name	Organization	Contact	Type of Participation
[REDACTED]	Property owner, pool member	[REDACTED]	Interview
[REDACTED]	Harvester operator for [REDACTED], contractor on [REDACTED] property	[REDACTED]	Interview
MacPhail, Mark	Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources – representing the 5 First Nations with interests on Cape Breton Island	mark@uinr.ca	Telephone interview
Plourde, Raymond	Ecology Action Centre (Halifax NS)	wilderness@ecologyaction.ca	Email

APPENDIX IV: Forest management standard conformance (confidential)

The table below demonstrates conformance or non-conformance with the Forest Stewardship Standard used for evaluation as required by FSC. The SmartWood Task Manager should provide guidance on which sections of the standard should be evaluated in a particular audit. SmartWood may evaluate only a subset of the criteria or principles of the standard in any one particular audit provided that the FME is evaluated against the entire standard by the end of the certificate duration. Findings of conformance or non conformance at the criterion level will be documented in the following table with a reference to an applicable CAR or OBS. The nonconformance and CAR is also summarized in a CAR table in Section 2.4. All non-conformances identified are described on the level on criterion though reference to the specific indicator shall be noted. Criteria not evaluated are identified with a NE.

P & C	Conformance: Yes/No/NE	Findings	NCR OBS (#)
Principle 1: COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND FSC PRINCIPLES			
1.1	Yes	<p>The FME has adapted their Policy Manual (rev. dated Dec 14, 2010) to include an expanded health and safety component under section 3.7. The S001 Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) include requirements that all landowners follow all laws related to employment and safety. They list the websites where relevant laws, hazard assessments and literature can be found. The SOPs have specific requirements for personal protective equipment (SOP7) and a work alone policy (SOP8). SOP9 confirms the rights of all workers to refuse unsafe work.</p> <p>It is the FMEs goal to approach 100% inspection of all commercial activities on member woodlots. Member woodlots are asked to communicate plans to harvest to the FME prior to harvesting so that an inspection can be coordinated. In the event that a member forgets to notify the FME, there is a reporting system via the NewPage mill that tells them which members have brought wood in during the previous week; the FME can then call up the woodlot owner and coordinate an on-site visit.</p> <p>A Health and Safety Tracking Record has been developed in order to summarize the results of the program. The Health and Safety Tracking Record records the results of all safety checklists and tracks any outstanding CARs. Since the end of June 2010 eight health and safety inspections have been carried out by the FME. This criterion is met.</p>	
1.2	Yes	Pool members check off that they are paid up on their taxes on their membership enrollment form. Smartwood reviewed documents provided by the FME indicating that their own office rent, taxes and not-for-profit status were fully up to date at the time of the 2011 annual audit. This criterion is met.	
1.3	Yes	The applicant is aware of these obligations. They have appropriate websites referenced in their policy and procedures document. This criterion is met.	

1.4	Yes	There were no documented conflicts between laws and FSC principles. This criterion is met.	
1.5	Yes	<p>The FME has developed and implemented procedures for preventing and reporting illegal activities, which is documented in the standard operating procedures (SOPs) under section 1.5.1 and 1.5.2. These procedures were developed through discussions with a local DNR Enforcement Officer, and by reviewing an information directive from the New Brunswick Federation of Woodlot Owners.</p> <p>These procedures were provided to all group members through a program update letter. At the time of the audit, there had been no reports of illegal harvesting received by the FME.</p> <p>The FME has also developed a system for documenting illegal harvesting reports and related evidence in their program database. Illegal harvesting is now one of the reporting options in the incidents and complaints database, which also includes records for open or closed status, actions to be taken, and the person(s) responsible.</p> <p>This criterion is met.</p>	
1.6	Yes	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. This endorsement is also included in the public summary for each management plan. 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. The NSLFFPA policy document exhibits a long-term commitment to FSC Principles and Criteria. This criterion is met.	
Principle 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT			
6.3	No	<p>Due to the unusually wet spring weather in 2011, there was a greater risk than usual of site damage due to rutting from machine operations on sensitive soils. Four of the nine properties visited in the field by the auditor had incurred significant site damage due to rutting from the forwarding operations. At the time of the site visit, one CAR had been issued by NSLFFPA to a group member in regard to site damage (rutting) incurred in the harvest operation during forwarding. Rutting damage was also observed on three other properties visited in the field by the auditor, and NSLFFPA staff indicated they would be issuing CARs to these group members as well. In addition, the FME expressed their intent to check for rutting damage on all other properties which had operations during the spring of 2011.</p> <p>NCR 01/12 has been issued, and is intended to focus on the prevention of future occurrences of site damage on member properties, especially during periods of unusually wet weather and on sensitive soils.</p> <p>The current draft version of the "Nova Scotia Policy Framework for</p>	<p>NCR 01/12</p> <p>Note 02/12</p>

		Forestry” indicated that levels of clearcutting in the province would be reduced by one-half. This reduction appears to be arbitrary and is not based on any consideration of stand condition or silvicultural needs in regard to Acadian Forest restoration strategies and objectives. Note 02/12 has been issued to check the status of the Nova Scotia Policy Framework for Forestry, and to consider its implications for the balance of silvicultural systems that may be implemented on group member properties.	
6.5	No	On two of the nine properties visited by the auditor in the field, there were issues with environmental impacts at crossings of ephemeral streams. In both cases, the contractor had failed to implement best management practices for the protection of water quality. NCR 02/12 has been issued and is intended to focus on the prevention of future occurrences of undue impacts at water crossing locations on member properties.	NCR 02/12
Principle 8. MONITORING			
8.1	Yes	<p>Due to the unusually wet spring weather in 2011, there was a greater risk than usual of site damage due to rutting from machine operations on sensitive soils. At the time of the site visit, one CAR had been issued by NSLFFPA to a group member in regard to site damage (rutting) incurred in the harvest operation during forwarding. Rutting damage was also observed on three other properties visited in the field by the auditor, and NSLFFPA staff indicated they would be issuing CARs to these group members as well. In addition, the FME expressed their intent to check for rutting damage on all other properties which had operations during the spring of 2011.</p> <p>Note 01/12 has been issued to check the status of these CARs, including any follow-up monitoring done by the FME, as well as any mitigative actions taken by the group members on the areas where site damage was incurred, and related effectiveness monitoring.</p>	Note 01/12
Principle 10. PLANTATIONS			
10.1	Yes	<p>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. The FME’s policies for plantations include the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest Renewal is a priority and where possible the promotion of natural regeneration will be encouraged by selecting appropriate treatments • The design of plantations will promote the protection, restoration and conservation of adjacent natural forests • Encourage replanting with species native to the area • The plantation promotes the conservation of natural forests • The plantation provides socioeconomic benefits for the community • Tree species are adapted to the area • GMOs are not used, and • Natural forests are not converted to plantations. 	

		<p>The FME's methodology for the assessment of plantation area is as follows. Planted areas within a NSLFFPA member woodlot are assessed and categorized as 'mixed plantation' or 'plantation' (also referred to as 'monoculture plantation') depending upon the structure and species composition within the planted area. If deemed a mixed plantation the area is considered certified and included in the total certifiable area while tracking the total mixed plantation area in 'Forest Breakdown'. If categorized as a monoculture plantation, the area is referenced to the total certifiable area of the woodlot (naturally forested area) and deemed non-certifiable if it is greater than 10% of the naturally forested area. If the area amounts to less than 10% of the total naturally forested area, the plantation is included as certified land and must have restoration objectives associated with it, as described in section 10 of the individual management plan.</p> <p>Plantation area (certified and not certified) is also tracked in the Forest Breakdown. Upon re-assessment (5 year intervals), any 'plantation' areas may be re-evaluated to determine current status with resulting changes adjusted in the individual plan and the 'Forest Breakdown'. By using the above methods for assessment, planted areas meeting the definition of "Plantations" as per the Maritimes SLIMF Standard are excluded from the certified area for member properties. This criterion has been met.</p>	
10.2		N/A	
10.3		N/A	
10.4		N/A	
10.5	Yes	<p>The FME's methodology for the assessment of plantation area ensures that planted areas meeting the definition of "Plantations" as per the Maritimes SLIMF Standard are excluded from the certified area for member properties. There are currently no group members with plantation area exceeding 10%. This criterion has been met.</p>	
10.6		N/A	
10.7		N/A	
10.8		N/A	
10.9		N/A	

APPENDIX V: 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)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Standing Tree/Stump: FME sells standing timber via stumpage sales.
<input checked="" 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 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:

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>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Note: This does not apply to on-site production of chips/biomass from wood harvested from the evaluated forest area.	
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:	

Annual Sales Information

Total Sales/ Turnover	US\$
Volume of certified product sold as FSC certified (i.e. FSC claim on sales documentation) (previous calendar year)	4358 m3
Value of certified product sold as FSC certified (i.e. FSC claim on sales documentation) (previous calendar year)	US\$

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

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 NSLFFPA's Policy document.	
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	
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:	
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: NSLFFPA provides the various mills with a list of all valid FSC members' PID numbers (property identification number). When the sale is set up the mill is provided with the PID number, and this is associated with the job. Wood is then trucked associated with that job, and the landowner / FSC status is automatically generated by a computerized system at the mill	

gate. A loading slip is generated for each truckload of wood that enters the respective mill.	
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	
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"/>
Findings: As described under 2.3 above, NSLFFPA provides the various mills with a list of all valid FSC members' PID numbers (property identification number). For each truckload of wood that enters the mill, a loading slip is generated. The loading slip includes documentation of the FSC certificate registration code and FSC claim.	
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: NSLFFPA receives copies of the loading slips referred to above, by email from the mills, and maintains these in an electronic database.	
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: NSLFFPA receives copies of the loading slips referred to above, by email from the mills, and maintains these in an electronic database. The records of each load are associated with dates, so monthly or annual summaries by customer can easily be generated.	

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	
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” 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).	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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 been updated to include suitable procedures for trademark use. At the time of the site visit there had been no requests to FSC for on-product nor off product FSC/Rainforest Alliance trademark use.	

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).	
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 contains procedures to address promotional/off product use. At the time of the site visit there had been no requests for off-product or promotional 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).	

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 VI: SmartWood Database Update Form

Instructions: For each FSC certificate, SmartWood is required to upload important summary information about each certificate to the FSC database (FSC-Info). During each annual audit SW auditors should work with the certificate holder to verify that the information posted on FSC-Info is up to date as follows:

1. Print out current Fact Sheet prior to audit from FSC-Info website or direct link to fact sheets (<http://www.fsc-info.org>)
2. Review information with the FME to verify all fields are accurate.
3. If changes are required (corrections, additions or deletions), **note only the changes** to the database information in the section below.
4. The changes identified to this form will be used by the SW office to update the FSC database.

Is the FSC database accurate and up-to-date? YES NO
(if yes, leave section below blank)

Client Information (contact info for FSC website listings)

Organization name	NSLFFPA		
Primary Contact	Wilma Stubb	Title	Executive Director
Primary Address	609 Church St., Port Hawkesbury NS	Telephone	902.625.3800
Address	B9A 2X4	Fax	
Email	nslffpa@ns.sympatico.ca	Webpage	www.nslffpa.org

Forests

Change to Group Certificate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Change in # of parcels in group	153 total members
Total certified area		15711 Hectares (or)	Acres

Species (note if item to be added or deleted)

Scientific name	Common name	Add/Delete

Products

Product type	Description	Add/Delete

APPENDIX VII: Group management conformance checklist *FSC-STD-30-005 v1-0* (confidential)

Group Certification Division of Responsibilities

Type of Forest Management Group:	Type I group	
Forest Management Activity	Group Entity	Group Member
Forest management planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FMU monitoring activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forest and resource inventory	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Harvest planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Harvesting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Training of forest workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Legal compliance (taxes, permitting, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Timber Sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FSC/RA trademark use (if applicable)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of division of responsibilities:		

Quality System Requirements

1.0 General Requirements	
1.1 The Group entity shall be an independent legal entity or an individual acting as a legal entity.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings required if No:	
1.2 The Group entity shall comply with relevant legal obligations, as registration and payment of applicable fees and taxes.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings required if No:	
1.3 The Group entity shall have a written public policy of commitment to the FSC Principles and Criteria.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings required if No:	
1.4 The Group entity shall define training needs and implement training activities and/or communication strategies relevant to the implementation of the applicable FSC standards.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
2.0 Responsibilities	
2.1 The Group entity shall clearly define and document 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"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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.	
Findings:	
2.2 The Group entity shall appoint a management representative as having overall responsibility and authority for the Group entity's compliance with all applicable	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

requirements of this standard.	
Findings:	
2.3 Group entity staff and Group members shall demonstrate knowledge of the Group's procedures and the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
3.0 Group Entity Procedures	
3.1 The Group entity shall establish, implement and maintain written procedures for Group membership covering all applicable requirements of this standard, according to scale and complexity of the group including: <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"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
3.2 The Group entity's procedures shall be sufficient to establish an efficient internal control system ensuring that all members are fulfilling applicable requirements.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
3.3 The Group entity shall define the personnel responsible for each procedure together with the qualifications or training measures required for its implementation.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
3.4 The Group entity or the certification body (upon request of Group entity and at the Group entities expense) shall 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.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
NOTE: for applicants complying with SLIMF eligibility criteria for size, the initial evaluation may be done through a desk audit.	
Findings:	
4.0 Group Member Informed Consent	
4.1 The Group entity shall provide each Group member with documentation, or access to documentation, specifying the relevant terms and conditions of Group membership. The documentation shall include: <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 	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<p>issued by the certification body and the group entity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	
Findings:	
<p>4.2 A consent declaration or equivalent shall be available between the Group Entity and each Group member or the member's representative who voluntarily wishes to participate in the Group. The consent declaration shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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, <i>and</i> V. authorize the Group entity to be the primary contact for certification and to apply for certification on the member's behalf. <p>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.</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
Findings:	
5.0 Group Records	
<p>5.1 The group entity shall maintain complete and up-to-date records covering all applicable requirements of this standard. These shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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-compliances identified in such inspections, actions taken to correct any such non-compliance; VII. Records of the estimated annual overall FSC production and annual FSC sales of the Group. <p>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.</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
Findings:	
<p>5.2 Group records shall be retained for at least five (5) years.</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
Findings:	
<p>5.3 Group entities shall 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"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>

NOTE: Group member certificates may however be requested from SmartWood.	
Findings:	

Group Features

6.0 Group Size	
6.1 The Group entity shall have sufficient human and technical resources to manage and control the Group in line with the requirements of this standard. 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.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
6.2 The Group entity shall specify in their procedures the maximum number of members that can be supported by the management system and the human and technical capacities of the Group entity.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
7.0 Multinational Groups	
7.1 Group schemes shall only be applied to national groups which are covered by the same Forest Stewardship Standard.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Findings required if No:	
7.2 The Group entity shall request formal approval by FSC IC through their accredited Certification Body to allow certification of such a group scheme.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Findings required if No:	

Internal Monitoring

8.0 Monitoring Requirements	
8.1 The Group entity shall implement a documented monitoring and control system that includes at least the following: 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"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
8.2 The Group entity shall define criteria to be monitored at each internal audit and according to the group characteristics, risk factors and local circumstances.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
8.3. The minimum sample to be visited annually for internal monitoring shall be determined as follows: 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 pending within the group. b) Type II Resource Manager Groups (see FSC-STD-30-005 v-1 section D Terms and definitions)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<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>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.</p>	
Findings:	
FSC-STD-30-005 recommendations for internal monitoring.	
8.4 For monitoring purposes the Group entity should use the same stratification into sets of 'like' FMUs as defined by the certification body in their evaluation.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8.5 The Group entity should visit different members in their annual monitoring than the ones selected for evaluation by the certification body, unless pending corrective actions, complaints or risk factors are requiring a revisit of the same units.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8.6 In the selection process of members to be visited, the Group entity should include random selection techniques.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:	
8.7 The Group entity shall issue corrective action requests to address non-compliances identified during their visits and monitor their implementation.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
8.8 Additional monitoring visits shall be scheduled when potential problems arise or the Group entity receives information from stakeholders about alleged violations of the FSC requirements by Group members.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
Findings:	
Group Assessment Requirements: (Completed by SW Task Manager/Lead Auditor)	
Group member size restriction:	
SW Certificate auditing strategy:	

APPENDIX VII-a: Certified Pool Participation List

- 1. Total # members in the certified pool: 153**
- 2. Total area in Current Pool (ha. or acres): 15,711 ha**

CERTIFIED POOL MEMBERSHIP TABLE