

2012

NSLFFPA – Forest Management Partnership



Promoting Sustainable Forest Management by Connecting Contractors and Private Woodlot Owners.

Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers
3/26/2012

Introduction

NSLFFPA Forest Management Partnership is a system and service provided by the Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers Association. The objective of the Forest Partnership is:

“to facilitate the completion of appropriate forest management activities by creating a 'community' where like-minded forest contractors and woodlot owners can interact”

The system has been developed with the needs of both forest contractors and landowners in mind.

For landowners, Forest Management Partnership provides a means of finding forest management contractors who have demonstrated a commitment to sustainable forest management. It also provides independent supervision of operations on their land, a benchmark of acceptable forest practices, and guidance on issues to discuss with a forest management contractor.

For contractors the partnership provides access to a database of identified, mapped and cruised forest management treatments, and the landowners that want these treatments completed. Membership in the Forest Management Partnership also offers contractors a way of distinguishing themselves as having met standards that are acceptable for working on an FSC certified landbase.

Requirements

NSLFFPA

The Association is responsible for maintaining and marketing the system for the benefit of landowners and contractors. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Encouraging landowners and forest management contractors to participate.
- Establishing and maintaining a steering committee composed of 3 woodlot owners and 3 contractors who will provide guidance and oversight to the partnership.
- Auditing to FSC and Partnership standards the forest management activities carried out on FSC woodlots by Partnership contractors.
- Maintaining an online database and map of treatments available to contractors within the Partnership.
- Maintain and promote an online database of Forest Management Contractors who are members of the Partnership.
- Enforcing a 'Complaints, Removal and Reinstatement Procedure' developed by the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee

The Forest Management Partnership Steering Committee will meet on a semi-annual basis to review progress and provide guidance on the operation of the Forest Partnership. The Steering Committee is responsible for establishing membership requirements, including auditing requirements and a Complaints, Removal and Reinstatement Procedure that is fair to both contractors and landowners. Once established the Steering Committee is also responsible for maintaining a balanced representation of contractors and landowners on the committee.

Landowners

Landowners who are members of the Partnership must be a member of the NSLFFPA FSC group, and agree to follow FSC principles. They must also be willing to provide on request a fair and balanced reference for any member contractors they have employed through the Partnership. Landowner members can choose to either contact Partnership contractors directly or post available work within the system. It is recognized that landowner members may also choose to use forest management contractors who are not Partnership members. FSC group members are not required to use Partnership contractors; however it is strongly encouraged.

Associate Landowners

Landowners who are not FSC group members but are NSLFFPA members may also join the Partnership as associate members. Associate members can choose to either contact Partnership contractors directly or post available work within the system. Auditing of forest management work on Associate Landowner woodlots is required. Auditing will be carried out by NSLFFPA on a cost recovery basis (\$250).

Forest Management Contractors

Forest Management Partnership membership by forest management contractors requires them to meet minimum standards as developed by the Steering Committee. It is recognized that as the program develops these minimum standards may be changed. These requirements include:

- Has attended a Forest Partnership / FSC training program
- Agrees to follow Forest Partnership / FSC forest management requirements
- Agrees to inform NSLFFPA in advance of any work carried out on Partnership woodlots
- Has appropriate WCB, Safety Training and Liability Insurance
- Willing to provide a member or associate member with a contract if requested
- Willing to provide a member or associate member with references if requested
- Agrees to follow the Forest Management Partnership Complaints Removal and Reinstatement Procedure

Complaints, Removal and Reinstatement Procedure

1. Landowners who have concerns about work being carried out by member contractors should discuss these concerns with the contractor immediately

2. If the problem cannot be resolved directly with the contractor the landowner should contact the Forest Partnership immediately.
3. NSLFFPA staff will investigate the issue and carry out a Partnership audit as soon as possible.
4. Based on the results of the investigation and audit a decision will be made immediately if any changes or remediation must be made by the contractor.
5. If a member contractor is unwilling to address the required changes or remediation they will be removed as a Partnership member.
6. Contractors removed from the Forest Partnership can be reinstated after 1 year by submitting a letter explaining actions taken to improve their forest operations and results. Reinstatement applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Auditing

NSLFFPA will attempt to audit as much Forest Partnership work as possible. Audits will be prioritized based on the following criteria:

- Harvesting activities are higher risk than silviculture
- Concerns expressed by member landowners
- HCVF or protected areas present near the operation
- Work carried out by new contractor members

The checklist to be used for the audit is contained in Appendix I.

Other Considerations

Contracts

The Forest Partnership does not require, but strongly encourages its members to use contracts for work carried out. Contracts help to ensure a clear understanding of expectations for both parties. An example contract can be provided by NSLFFPA, and is also contained in the Appendix of Forest Management Plans.

Pre-Work Checklist

The forest partnership does not require, but strongly encourages landowners and contractors to review the following checklist prior to agreeing to undertake forest management activities.

- Who will contact adjacent landowners (30m of a property boundary or 100m of a dwelling for harvesting activities 30 days prior to harvest start)?
- Have contractor references been reviewed (suggest at least three)?
- Is there explicit understanding about
 - Areas to be cut?

- Areas to be left?
- Products / Species to be harvested?
- Product destinations?
- Acceptable utilization?
- Are property lines clearly identified and who is responsible for this?
- What condition will roads be left in, who is responsible and how are costs shared?
- What is acceptable rutting?
- Is there a time of year (wet) when the job should not be carried out?
- Is there a defined pricing and payment schedule?
- Will all garbage be removed and the site left in an acceptable condition?

Available Resources

Various resources are available to Partnership members at www.nslffpa.org. Access to this information is restricted to Forest Management Partnership Members through a member name and login ID. Alternatively, members who do not have internet access can contact NSLFFPA directly for the information.

- Maps of available treatments
- List of Partnership contractors
- Example contracts
- Auditing and inspection information

How to Join

Landowners

Landowners who are already members of the NSLFFPA FSC Program can simply join online at nslffpa.org, or by contacting NSLFFPA for a membership form. When you join you have the option of making treatments you want completed available within the program. Landowners who join must agree to provide, if requested, a fair reference for any member contractor doing forest management through the Partnership.

Associate Landowners

Landowners who are not part of the NSLFFPA FSC Program are welcome to contact the Association to request membership. These Landowners also have the option of joining the Partnership as Associate Members. As an Associate Member they have access to the list of Partnership contractors, and may also post work they have available within the system. Associate Members are required to have work on their land that is completed by a Partnership contractor audited to Forest Management Partnership standards. This will be carried out by NSLFFPA staff on a cost recovery basis – approximately \$300.

Contractors

Contractors wishing to join the NSLFFPA Forest Management Partnership must first attend a one day training session, and provide proof of required WCB, Safety Training and Liability Insurance. Contractors must then sign a membership agreement where they commit to meeting FSC and Partnership requirements.