

Wisconsin DNR State Lands

101 South Webster Street, Madison, WI 53703

1Y941

SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules® Section 2
Forest Management

2nd Surveillance Audit

Report Date: September 3, 2017



NSF International

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NSF International Forestry Program Audit Report

A. Program Participant Name

Wisconsin DNR State Lands

NSF Customer Number (FRS)

1Y941

Contact Information (Name, Title, Phone & Email)

Mark A. Heyde

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Phone: (608) 267-0565

Mark.Heyde@wisconsin.gov

B. Scope of Certification

Forest management operations on approximately 1,531,210 acres of WI State Lands. The SFI Standard certification number is NSF-SFI-FM-1Y941.

Locations Included in the Certification

Categories included in the DNR Lands forest certification review include:

- Northern and Southern State Forests
- State Parks
- State Recreation Trails
- State Wildlife Areas (including leased federal lands, Meadow Valley W.A.)
- State Fisheries Areas
- State Natural Areas
- Natural Resource Protection and Management Areas
- Lower Wisconsin Riverway
- State Wild Rivers
- State Owned Islands
- Stewardship Demonstration Forests

The following DNR properties (about 155,000 acres) are excluded from the certification project:

- Agricultural fields (due to potential GMO issue)
- Stream Bank Protection Areas (eased lands not under DNR management)
- Forest Legacy Easements (eased lands not under DNR management)
- States Fish Hatcheries and Rearing Ponds (intensive non-forest use)
- State Forest Nurseries (intensive non-forest use)
- Nonpoint Pollution Control Easements (eased lands not under DNR management)
- Poynette Game Farm and McKenzie Environmental Center (intensive non-forest use)
- Boat Access Sites (intensive non-forest use)
- Fire Tower Sites (intensive non-forest use)
- Radio Tower Sites (intensive non-forest use)
- Ranger Stations (intensive non-forest use)
- Administrative Offices and Storage Buildings (intensive non-forest use)
- State Park Intensively Developed Recreation Areas (intensive non-forest use) e.g. Peninsula State Park golf course, Blue Mound State Park swimming pool
- State Trails Cooperatively Managed by Others (planning and management authority given to others by MOU; primarily counties).

C. NSF Audit Team

Norman Boatwright – SFI Lead Auditor, FSC Technical Expert, Beth Jacqmain - FSC Lead Auditor/SFI Team Auditor and Ruthann Shulte – SFI/FSC Team Auditor.

D. Audit Dates

August 22-25, 2017

E. Reference Documentation (Standards, Guidance, etc.)

SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2

Company Documentation (Program Manual, Procedures, etc.)

Numerous policy and procedure documents.

F. Audit Results: Based on the results of this assessment, the auditor concluded:

- Acceptable with no nonconformities
- The following nonconformities were identified and will require corrective action:

Major: 0 Minor: 1

In addition, no opportunities for improvement (OFIs) were identified.

G. Changes to Operations or to the Standard

Note: Were there any significant changes in operations, procedures, specifications, facility records, etc., from the previous visit?

- Yes (Please explain): The WIDNR is in the process of completing a major realignment. *“As alignment implementation proceeds many staff are taking on new responsibilities or moving to entirely new positions. Some confusion as to responsibilities is normal and supervisors are working closely with staff to clarify responsibilities, identify training needs, and assure that gaps are filled. Assuring conformance to forest certification standards remains a priority in the newly aligned organization.”*
- No

H. Other Issues Reviewed

- Yes No N/A Public report from previous audit(s) is posted on the [SFI/SBP/etc.] website
- Yes No N/A Relevant industry specific logos or labels (SFI, PEFC, etc.) are utilized correctly.
 Note: A review of a sample of logo and trademark use by state forests and other state lands in the area audited determined that the DNR’s use of SFI logos and trademarks don’t conform to current trademark use and approval guidelines. This issue was identified during the internal audit by the DNR’s management system and is being adequately addressed internally.
- Yes No N/A Relevant accreditation logos (ANSI or ANAB) are utilized correctly and meet rules specified in NSF SOP 14680 and SOP 4876.
- Yes No N/A Nonconformities from previous audit were reviewed. No nonconformities issued in 2016

I. Future Audit Schedule

Following the initial registration audit, continued certification requires annual assessments commonly referred to as “Surveillance Audits”. Additionally, at the end of the certification period, maintaining certification requires the completion of a recertification or “Reassessment Audit”. The third surveillance audit was not scheduled at this time because the contract has expired and the project will be bid sometime this winter. Audit dates and state forests for audit will be determined then if NSF is the successful bidder.

J. Appendices

- Appendix 1: Audit Notification Letter and Audit Schedule
- Appendix 2: SFI Forest Management Public Summary Report
- Appendix 3: SFI Forest Management Audit Checklist and Site Visit Notes
- Appendix 4: Meeting Attendance



Appendix 1
Audit Notification Letter and Audit Schedule



Audit Notification Letter

Mark A. Heyde
Forest Certification Coordinator
Public and Private Forestry Section
Bureau of Forest Management
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
phone: (608) 267-0565
cell: (608) 220-9780
Mark.Heyde@wisconsin.gov

August 15, 2017

Re: Confirmation of 2017 SFI Standard Surveillance Audit

Dear Mark,

As we have discussed, I am scheduled to conduct the Surveillance Audit of the WIDNR State Lands Tuesday through Friday August 22-25, 2017. This is a partial review of your SFI Program to confirm that it continues to be in conformance with the SFI Standard and that continual improvement is being made.

The audit team will consist of me as SFI Lead Auditor, Beth Jacqumain as the FSC Lead Auditor and Ruthann Shulte as the Team Auditor.

During the audit, I will:

1. Review progress on achieving SFI objectives and performance measures and the results of the management review of your SFI Program;
2. Review selected components of your SFI program;
3. Verify effective implementation of any corrective action plans from the previous NSF audit;
4. Review logo and/or label use;
5. Confirm public availability of public reports; and
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of planned activities aimed at continual improvement of your SFI Program.

You will be audited to the 2015-2019 SFI Standards and Rules®, Section 2.

We have worked together to develop the following tentative schedule. The schedule can be adapted either in advance or on-site to accommodate any special circumstances.

I look forward to visiting you and evaluating continual improvement in your SFI Program. If you have any questions regarding this planned audit, please call me at 843.229.1851.

Sincerely yours,

Norman I. Boatwright, III

Norman I. Boatwright, III
Lead Auditor, NSF



WDNR State Lands Audit 2017 – Black River Falls Forestry Area

<u>Monday Aug 21</u>			
Shulte arrives MSD	1:21 pm		
Boatwright arrives MSN	2:58 pm		
Jacqmain drives to Black Water Falls			
Heyde drives Boatwright & Shulte to the Black Water Falls hotel			
<u>Tuesday Aug 22</u>			
8:00-9:45	Opening Meeting		Black River DNR service Center
	Forest Cert Overview	Auditors	ICIT, Admin, program district leaders
	Audit Scope and Process	Auditors	
		DNR	(related to certification including new or updated guidance, strategic plans, policy, initiatives, accomplishments)
	CAR/OFI Review Audit Plan	Auditor/ ICIT	
FIELD AUDIT PORTION BEGINS			
9:45-10:00	Black River State Forest Opening		State Forest Staff and partners
10:00- 12:00	Black River SF site audit		All Auditors,3 sites (2 sales, regen)
12:00	Black River SF Lunch Site		Teams B/C meet here
12:45 – 4:30	Team A – Black River SF Team B – Team C -	Property mgr., forester, others	4 sites 3 sites 3 sites
<u>Wed August 23</u>			
Field Audits – 3 teams			
8:00 – 4:00	Team A Team B Team C	Property mgr., forester, others	5 sites 5 sites 5 Sites +1 some team
<u>Thursday Aug 24</u>			
Field Audits – 3 teams			
8:00 – 4:00	Team A Team B Team C	Property mgr., forester, others	5 sites 5 sites 5 Sites +1 some team
4:30-6:30 Overnight Madison	Travel to Madison		
<u>Friday Aug 25</u>			
8:00 – 12:00	Madison Auditor Time and DNR Program Updates DNR Forestry FWP Master Planning	Auditors/ ICIT	
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Exit Meeting	Auditors	FR and FWP leadership Admin, BD's, SC, affected Program / Staff



			leads
Jacqmain drives home	2:00 pm		
Boatwright departs MSN	3:59 pm		
Shulte departs MSN	5:37 pm		



Appendix 2
SFI Forest Management Public Summary Report

Wisconsin DNR State Lands

2017 SFI Public Summary Surveillance Audit Report

Introduction

The SFI Program of the Wisconsin DNR has achieved continuing conformance with the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2, according to the NSF SFI FM Certification Audit Process. This report describes the 2017 Surveillance Audit designed to consider portions of the program and requirements, including any changes in operations, the management review system, and efforts at continuous improvement.

The Wisconsin State Forests have been certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Standard since May 5, 2004 (SFI certificate #NSF-SFI- FM-1Y941). In 2009 the scope of the Wisconsin SFI Program was expanded, and the program was recertified including programs for the management of several categories of state lands beyond state forests, including parks, wildlife lands, and other categories of generally forested lands. DNR land included in the project includes approximately 1,511,210 acres. Excised acreage includes predominantly special purpose lands (such as fish hatcheries, tree nurseries, communications towers, and administrative sites) and land under easement where DNR does not have land management authority. The program was recertified to the SFI 2010-2014 Standard in 2012 and recertified to the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 in 2015.

An Overview of WIDNR Realignment

Source: <http://dnr.wi.gov/news/releases/article/?id=4135>

“DNR started the strategic alignment effort in July 2015 to prioritize core work and align the department's functions and organizational structure with available resources. The effort was launched against the backdrop of a growing workload and a constrained fiscal outlook. The implementation will be accomplished in phases with final changes anticipated by early 2018.

While the effort will result in improved service delivery and enhanced integration of department resources, it will require changes in job descriptions for some employees. The alignment will not result in an overall reduction in the number of jobs at DNR.

Following are a few key points regarding the overall agency and some specific program-level changes:

- DNR's mission is not changing and the alignment effort will not weaken environmental or conservation standards. Instead, the effort is intended to maximize how we use the staff resources we have available, working with our partners to accomplish our mission.
- The alignment effort will involve significant changes for approximately 5 percent of the department's 2,549 full-time employees. These changes may include changes to position descriptions, differences in reporting structure or changes in division assignments resulting from the transformation of seven operational units to five: Forestry; Fish, Wildlife and Parks; Environmental Management; Internal Services; and External Services.
- Other employees may see lesser changes to their position descriptions or program structures. A majority of employees will see no change.
- Responsibility for staff with law enforcement authority will be shifted to the Bureau of Law Enforcement. Law enforcement specialization will improve consistency in delivery of services and administrative efficiencies with hiring, training and policy development.
- The Fish, Wildlife and Parks Division will manage all property management staff and functions. As a result of the changes, Fish, Wildlife and Parks will provide better customer experiences at state properties and more effectively deploy staff and equipment to perform needed habitat work.
- Also, the department's 19 researchers now located in the Bureau of Science Services will join other scientists within programs as well as a new Office of Applied Science within the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Division to ensure management decisions are informed by the best available science.”

An Overview of Forest Management on Wisconsin State Forests

Wisconsin DNR lands are managed for multiple-use objectives. Along with non-timber objectives, the DNR lands are used to demonstrate various forest practices to the public, while meeting a variety of habitat objectives. Resource managers within the Department of Natural Resources use these objectives in conjunction with other demands to manage each state forest as a healthy ecosystem. In recent years the average annual harvest has been budgeted at 18,000 acres. This a very conservative number and is based on area regulation. A majority of the harvests occur on State Forests (which constitute 1/3 of the DNR land base). Reflecting a greater focus on non-timber objectives, other DNR land such as wildlife areas and state parks (with 2/3 of the land base) produce 1/3 of the average annual harvest acreage.

Of the area harvested a majority of the management prescriptions are thinnings, which reduce the density of stems to accelerate growth of the remaining trees and vertical structural diversity within the stand harvested. The remaining stands that are actively managed are harvested using regeneration techniques. After harvest these stands are either replanted or regenerate naturally and continue to grow and produce forests and wood products for future generations. These regenerating forests also provide important habitat for species associated with young forests such as the snowshoe hare and woodcock.

Harvested stands are either regenerated naturally or are planted with seedlings. The determination of which method to use is based on the ability of the site to regenerate naturally and the ability of the desired species to regenerate on a particular site. For example, if a site experiences hot and dry conditions planting may be the best alternative. This is most common for the pine species, especially jack pine.

Even-aged and uneven-aged management schemes are the harvest systems employed on Wisconsin DNR's land. Even-aged management includes clearcuts, clearcuts with reserves, seed tree methods, shelterwood cuttings, and intermediate thinnings. Uneven-aged management includes both individual and group selection techniques. Each of these systems and techniques are designed in conjunction with a particular tree species or community of trees. For example, uneven-aged single tree and group selection techniques are used in northern hardwoods, hemlock-hardwood, and swamp hardwood stands. In contrast, even-aged clearcuts are used in pine (red, white, and jack), paper birch, aspen, oak, northern hardwoods, scrub oak, aspen, fir-spruce, and black spruce stands. The selection of a management system and specific technique depends on many factors including tree composition, age of the stand, location, accessibility, and most importantly the long-term objectives for the stand under consideration."

An Overview of Forest Management on Wisconsin State Park Lands

Source: Managing Forests on Wisconsin State Park Lands 2010

Background

Wisconsin's forested lands are some of our state's most valuable resources, prized by visitors and citizens alike. People come to these special places for moments of quiet reflection or simply to be in the great outdoors. They pursue recreational opportunities ranging from biking and hiking to camping, wildlife watching, and cross-country skiing.

Scenic beauty — or "visual quality" — is one of the primary reasons people choose to spend their recreation and vacation time in or near forested areas and within Wisconsin State Park System (WSPS) properties. They are also attracted by the serenity and solitude of the outdoors. Forested landscapes inspire spiritual and emotional connections resulting in deeply personal experiences for many people.

Protecting and enhancing this sensory experience is a priority for those entrusted with managing WSPS properties. In addition, management must work to sustain healthy communities that provide economic, social, and ecological benefits, now and for future generations. This careful oversight of our natural resources is a cornerstone of the WSPS mission.

Overall Management Priorities

Sustaining healthy forests is a vital role of WSPS properties, and the key to sustaining healthy forests is pro-active management. To ensure that management practices are consistent with the goals and objectives of the WSPS, several management priorities have been established but may vary depending on site characteristics:

- **Aesthetics:** Protect scenic views and allow forest cover to provide settings for solitude and privacy.
- **Recreation:** Sustain large canopy cover and shade in picnic areas, campgrounds, along nature trails, and high use areas.
- **Habitat:** Provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife and plants, including endangered and threatened species.
- **Forest Health:** Allow for regeneration of the forest through quality forest management and seek opportunities that enhance or maintain the overall health and vigor of the forest ecosystem.
- **Pest management:** Manage invasive plant and animal species, pests, diseases, and nuisance wildlife through prevention, control, and eradication activities.

- **Education and research:** Provide opportunities for interpretation, education, and scientific research.
- **Water quality:** Sustain and enhance local watersheds and water resources including erosion control along waterways, trails, and other property features.”

An Overview of Forest Management on Wisconsin Wildlife Areas

Since 1876, the State of Wisconsin has been acquiring land to meet conservation and recreation needs. Public lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provide many opportunities and public spaces for people to hunt, fish, trap, hike, canoe, or watch or photograph wildlife.

All wildlife areas are managed to sustain the wildlife and natural communities found on the properties and to provide a full range of traditional outdoor recreational uses. These include hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and nature study. Edible fruits, edible nuts, wild mushrooms, wild asparagus and watercress may be removed by hand without a permit for the purpose of personal consumption by the collector. Dog training or trialing (hunting dog competitions) may be allowed by permit. A limited number of properties allow additional outdoor recreation at designated locations; like camping, bicycling, horseback riding and snowmobiling. The forest resources on state wildlife areas can be broadly characterized as Oak and Pine Barrens, Southern Forests, Oak Savanna, and Northern Forests.

Oak and Pine Barrens

Less than 1% of the pre-settlement oak and pine barren habitat remains. The long-term sustainability of this habitat and the organisms that it supports requires that the existing scattered sites be protected and connected. The composition, structure, and ecological function of these communities depend on periodic fires as a management tool but may be mimicked with appropriately applied timber management strategies and aggressive post-sale treatment applied as a shifting mosaic across the appropriate ecological landscapes.

Southern Forests

Although the southern forest type is common, large, high-quality, unbroken tracts are becoming rare. Oak regeneration continues to be a problem on dry-mesic and mesic sites. With lack of fire or other disturbance, oak forests are continuing to convert to more mesic forest species. Oak wilt and competition from invasive shrubs continue to be a problem in some areas. Appropriately applied timber management strategies are critical to maintaining the oak resource.

Oak Savanna

In the absence of active management, the future of oak savanna looks very bleak in Wisconsin and throughout its entire range. The increasing abandonment of lightly to moderately grazed wooded pastures and the accelerating succession of oak woodlots toward heavy shade producing trees and shrubs will lead to the decline and possible loss of much of what remains of the savanna flora and fauna, including eventual decline of the oaks themselves. In a few ecological landscapes, the recovery potential exists with active management.

Northern Forest

Overall stand age has decreased and tree species relative abundance has changed. Generalist species have increased and specialist species have declined. Invasive species have continued to degrade northern forests. Second growth northern hardwood forests lack species diversity. However, there is still great potential for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in the northern forest. Identification of “high conservation value” forests via planning processes increase the likelihood that we’ll sustain ecologically important forests. Maintaining a full spectrum of forest ecosystems in the appropriate ecological landscapes with a range of successional stages, patch sizes, ages, geographic distribution, and connectivity is an important timber management goal.

Surveillance Audit Process

The Surveillance Audit was performed by NSF on August 22-25, 2016 by an audit team headed by Norman Boatwright, SFI Lead Auditor. The audit was conducted in conjunction with an FSC FM audit and the FSC audit team members included Beth Jacqumain, FSC Lead Auditor and Ruthann Shulte, Team Auditor. Audit team members fulfill the qualification criteria for conducting SFIS Certification Audits found in Section 9 – SFI 2015-2019 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications contained in Requirements for the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules. The Wisconsin DNR’s management representative is Mark Heyde, Forest Certification Coordinator, Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry.

The objective of the audit was to assess conformance of the firm’s SFI Program to the requirements of the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules, Section 2. The audit served to assess conformance with a portion of the standard to determine conformity. The audit was conducted in conjunction with an FSC audit covering the same lands and organization and by the same audit team. The two processes (SFI and FSC) shared teams and reviewed much of the same evidence, but each program had a different team leader and audit objectives. This report is intended to describe the SFI portion of the evaluation only (more information about the FSC portion of the evaluation is available from WDNR).

The Indicators and Performance Measures of the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 were utilized without modification or substitution.

The audit was governed by an audit plan and by NSF audit protocols designed to enable the audit team determine conformance with the applicable SFI requirements. The process included the assembly and review of audit evidence consisting of documents, interviews, and on-site inspections of ongoing or completed forest practices. Documents describing these activities and lists of management activities were provided to the auditors in advance, and a sample of the available field sites was designated by the lead auditor for review. Approximately twenty percent (20%) of the sites visited were randomly selected. The remaining field sites were selected based on the risk of environmental impact, special features, and other criteria outlined in the NSF-SFI-SOP. 58 field sites were visited consisting of 21 thinnings, 19 regeneration harvests, 14 wildlife/trail/prairie management, 3 storm salvages and 1 artificial regeneration.

During the audit, the audit team reviewed a sample of the available written documentation as objective evidence of SFIS Conformance. The lead auditor also selected and interviewed stakeholders such as contract loggers, landowners and other interested parties, and interviewed employees within the organization to confirm that the SFI Standard was understood and actively implemented.

The possible findings for specific SFI requirements included Full Conformance, Major Non-conformance, Minor Non-conformance, Opportunities for Improvement, and Practices that exceeded the Basic Requirements of the SFIS.

2017 Audit Findings

A new minor non-conformance was observed:

CI 3.1.3 *Monitoring of overall best management practices implementation.*

Finding: The interview with a logger on an active timber sale on the Dunnville WMA Tract 2-2015 indicated that the logger did not have access to a spill kit. This is a requirement specified in the WIBMP Manual, Chapter 9 pp 116.

2016 Audit Findings

PM 1.1: *Program Participants shall ensure that forest management plans include long-term harvest levels that are sustainable and consistent with appropriate growth-and-yield models.* There is an opportunity to improve the master planning process to ensure the plans are completed as scheduled.

2017 Findings: Audit confirmed the Master Planning effort exceeded the goal for 2016:

Master Planning Metrics - July 2017			
% of acres under an NRB-approved master plan per NR44 requirements			
Fiscal Year	Acres w/ NR44 approved plan	% under approved NR44 MP	Target % under approved MP
13	645,815	45.9	
14	663,027	47.1	
15	672,893	47.8	50
16	754,306	53.6	55
17	865,929	61.6	60
18	914381		65
19	984718		70
20	1055055		75
21	1125392		80
22	1195729		85
23	1266066		90
24	1336403		95
25	1406740		100
based on 1,406,740 acres of Tier 1 and 2 properties			

“The NRB recently approved a new strategy to address master planning by grouping properties by ecological landscape. The first pilot landscape planning project is underway and it is hoped that planning efficiencies will be gained through this planning model while maintaining conformance to forest certification standards. Regarding IFMPs the total acreage has declined as IFMPs are replaced by master plans”.

CI 2.4.1: Program to protect forests from damaging agents. There is an opportunity to improve the process of protecting forests from damaging agents such as invasives.

2017 Findings: WIDNR website has a section on damaging agents that describes the agent’s life span and how to treat them. Invasive exotic plants inventory and management systems are being developed to implement new invasive exotic species laws (NR40). Revisions to the NR40 list were adopted in 2015. A state-wide invasive species strategic plan was approved in 2013. The Department has an invasive species team that is working to implement NR40.

Wisconsin DNR employs forest health specialists and makes their services readily available to the field units. Pest updates are published quarterly.

General Description of Evidence of Conformity

NSF's audit team used a variety of evidence to determine conformance. A general description of this evidence is provided below, organized by SFI Objective.

Objective 1. Forest Management Planning - To ensure forest management plans include long-term sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid forest conversion.

Summary of Evidence – Not audited in 2017.

Objective 2. Forest Productivity - To ensure long-term forest productivity, carbon storage and conservation of forest resources through prompt reforestation, afforestation, minimized chemical use, soil conservation, and protecting forests from damaging agents.

Summary of Evidence – Field observations and records associated with each timber harvest (2460 form and associated narratives) were used to confirm practices. Wisconsin DNR has programs for reforestation, for protection against insects, diseases, and wildfire, and for careful management of activities which could potentially impact soil and long-term productivity.

Objective 3. Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources - To protect the water quality of rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands and other water bodies through meeting or exceeding best management practices.

Summary of Evidence – Field observations of a range of sites were the key evidence. Auditors visited the portions of many field sites that were close to water resources, based on a field sample that was oriented heavily towards such sites.

Objective 4. Conservation of Biological Diversity including Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value - To manage the quality and distribution of wildlife habitats and contribute to the conservation of biological diversity by developing and implementing stand- and landscape-level measures that promote a diversity of types of habitat and successional stages, and the conservation of forest plants and animals, including aquatic species, as well as threatened and endangered species, Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old-growth forests and ecologically important sites.

Summary of Evidence – Field observations, written plans and policies, use of college-trained field biologists, availability of specialists, and regular staff involvement in conferences and workshops that cover scientific advances were the evidence used to assess the requirements involved biodiversity conservation. The close support and cooperation of various agencies, including those responsible for wildlife, fisheries, recreation, and endangered resources, were another key factor in the assessment.

Objective 5. Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits - To manage the visual impact of forest operations and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

Summary of Evidence – Field observations of completed operations and policies/procedures for visual quality were assessed during the evaluation. Further maps of recreation sites, combined with field visits, helped confirm a strong recreation program. Recreational use and esthetics were priority concerns where appropriate.

Objective 6. Protection of Special Sites - To manage lands that are ecologically, geologically, or culturally important in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

Summary of Evidence – Not audited in 2017.

Objective 7. Efficient Use of Forest Resources - To minimize waste and ensure the efficient use of fiber resources.

Summary of Evidence – Not audited in 2017.

Objective 8. Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights - To recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights and traditional knowledge.

Summary of Evidence: Not audited in 2017.

Objective 9. Legal and Regulatory Compliance - To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state and local laws and regulations.

Summary of Evidence – Not audited in 2017.

Objective 10. Forestry Research, Science, and Technology - To invest in forestry research, science and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based and broaden the awareness of climate change impacts on forests, wildlife and biological diversity.

Summary of Evidence – Not audited in 2017.

Objective 11. Training and Education - To improve the implementation of sustainable forestry practices through appropriate training and education programs.

Summary of Evidence – Not audited in 2017.

Objective 12. Community Involvement in the Practice of Sustainable Forestry - To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry through public outreach, education, and involvement, and to support the efforts of SFI Implementation Committees.

Summary of Evidence – Not audited in 2017.

Objective 13. Public Land Management Responsibilities - To participate and implement sustainable forest management on public lands.

Summary of Evidence – Not audited in 2017.

Objective 14. Communications and Public Reporting - To increase transparency and to annually report progress on conformance with the SFI Forest Management Standard.

Summary of Evidence – Reports filed with SFI Inc. and the SFI Inc. website provided the key evidence.

Objective 15. Management Review and Continual Improvement - To promote continual improvement in the practice of sustainable forestry by conducting a management review and monitoring performance.

Summary of Evidence – Records of program reviews, agendas and notes from management review meetings, and interviews with personnel from all involved levels in the organization were assessed. The Forest Leadership Team of the Forestry Division and the Leadership Team of the Fish, Wildlife, Parks Division are the critical components of management review; minutes of meetings supplemented by interviews served to confirm compliance.

Relevance of Forestry Certification

Third-party certification provides assurance that forests are being managed under the principles of sustainable forestry, which are described in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard as:

1. Sustainable Forestry

To practice sustainable forestry to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates reforestation and the managing, growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products and ecosystem services such as the conservation of soil, air and water quality, carbon, biological diversity, wildlife and aquatic habitats, recreation, and aesthetics.

2. Forest Productivity and Health

To provide for regeneration after harvest and maintain the productive capacity of the forest land base, and to protect and maintain long-term forest and soil productivity. In addition, to protect forests from economically or environmentally undesirable levels of wildfire, pests, diseases, invasive exotic plants and animals and other damaging agents and thus maintain and improve long-term forest health and productivity.

3. Protection of Water Resources

To protect water bodies and riparian zones, and to conform with best management practices to protect water quality.

4. Protection of Biological Diversity

To manage forests in ways that protect and promote biological diversity, including animal and plant species, wildlife habitats, and ecological or natural community types.

5. Aesthetics and Recreation

To manage the visual impacts of forest operations, and to provide recreational opportunities for the public.

6. Protection of Special Sites

To manage forests and lands of special significance (ecologically, geologically or culturally important) in a manner that protects their integrity and takes into account their unique qualities.

7. Responsible Fiber Sourcing Practices in North America

To use and promote among other forest landowners sustainable forestry practices that are both scientifically credible and economically, environmentally and socially responsible.

8. Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Illegal Logging in Offshore Fiber Sourcing

To avoid wood fiber from illegally logged forests when procuring fiber outside of North America, and to avoid sourcing fiber from countries without effective social laws.



9. Legal Compliance

To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations.

10. Research

To support advances in sustainable forest management through forestry research, science and technology.

11. Training and Education

To improve the practice of sustainable forestry through training and education programs.

12. Public Involvement

To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry on public lands through community involvement.

13. Transparency

To broaden the understanding of forest certification to the SFI 2010-2014 Standard by documenting certification audits and making the findings publicly available.

14. Continual Improvement

To continually improve the practice of forest management, and to monitor, measure and report performance in achieving the commitment to sustainable forestry.

Source: Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Standard, 2010-2014 Edition

For Additional Information Contact:

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Appendix 3
SFI Forest Management Audit Checklist and Site Notes



SFI 2015-2019, Section 2: Forest Management Standard Audit Checklist

FRS #1Y941: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources – DNR State Lands

Date of audit: August 22-25, 2017

Auditors: Norman Boatwright – Lead Auditor, Beth Jacqmain – Team Auditor and Ruthann Shulte – Team Auditor (PM 4.1)

Audited in 2017.

1.2 Additional Requirements

SFI Program Participants with fiber sourcing programs (acquisition of roundwood and field-manufactured or primary-mill residual chips, pulp and veneer to support a forest products facility), must also conform to the *SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

Use of the *SFI* on-product labels and claims shall follow Section 5 - Rules for Use of *SFI* On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks as well as ISO 14020:2000.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: FM only.

Objective 1 Forest Management Planning

To ensure forest management plans include *long-term* sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid forest conversion.

Performance Measure 1.1

Program Participants shall ensure that forest management plans include *long-term* harvest levels that are sustainable and consistent with appropriate *growth-and-yield models*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

1.1.1 Forest management planning at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the operation, including:

- a. a *long-term* resources analysis;
- b. a periodic or ongoing *forest inventory*;
- c. a land classification system;
- d. biodiversity at *landscape scales*;
- e. soils inventory and maps, where available;
- f. access to *growth-and-yield modeling* capabilities;
- g. up-to-date maps or a geographic information system (GIS);
- h. recommended sustainable harvest levels for areas available for harvest; and
- i. a review of non-timber issues (e.g., recreation, tourism, pilot projects and economic incentive *programs* to promote water *protection*, carbon storage, *bioenergy feedstock* production, or *biological diversity conservation*, or to address climate-induced ecosystem change).

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

1.1.2 Documented current harvest trends fall within long-term sustainable levels identified in the forest management plan.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

1.1.3 A *forest inventory* system and a method to calculate growth and yield.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:



1.1.4 Periodic updates of *forest inventory* and recalculation of planned harvests to account for changes in growth due to *productivity* increases or decreases, including but not limited to: improved data, *long-term* drought, fertilization, *climate change*, changes in forest land ownership and tenure, or *forest health*.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

1.1.5 Documentation of forest practices (e.g., *planting*, fertilization and thinning) consistent with assumptions in harvest plans.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

Performance Measure 1.2

Program Participants shall not convert one *forest cover type* to another *forest cover type*, unless in justified circumstances.

- 1.2.1 Program Participants shall not convert one *forest cover type* to another *forest cover type*, unless the conversion:
- a. Is in compliance with relevant national and regional *policy* and legislation related to land use and forest management;
 - b. Would not convert *native* forest types that are rare and ecologically significant at the *landscape* level or put any *native* forest types at risk of becoming rare; and
 - c. Does not create significant long-term adverse impacts on Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old-growth forests, forests critical to threatened and endangered species, and special sites.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

1.2.2 Where a *Program Participant* intends to convert another *forest cover type*, an assessment considers:

- a. *Productivity* and *stand* quality conditions and impacts which may include social and economic values;
- b. Specific ecosystem issues related to the site such as invasive species, insect or disease issues, riparian *protection* needs and others as appropriate to site including regeneration challenges; and
- c. Ecological impacts of the conversion including a review at the site and *landscape* scale as well as consideration for any appropriate mitigation measures.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

Performance Measure 1.3

Program Participants shall not have within the scope of their certification to this *SFI Standard*, forest lands that have been converted to non-forest land use. Indicator:

- 1.3.1 Forest lands converted to other land uses shall not be certified to this *SFI Standard*. This does not apply to forest lands used for forest and *wildlife* management such as *wildlife* food plots or infrastructure such as forest roads, log processing areas, trails etc.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

Objective 2 Forest Health and Productivity

To ensure *long-term forest productivity*, carbon storage and *conservation* of forest resources through prompt *reforestation*, *afforestation*, *minimized chemical use*, *soil conservation*, and protecting forests from damaging agents.

Performance Measure 2.1

Program Participants shall promptly reforest after final harvest. Indicators:

2.1.1 Documented *reforestation* plans, including designation of all harvest areas for either natural, planted or direct seeded regeneration and prompt *reforestation*, unless delayed for site-specific environmental or *forest health* considerations or legal requirements, through *planting* within two years or two *planting* seasons, or by planned *natural regeneration* methods within five years.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: WisFIRS System is maintained for foresters to schedule reforestation; which issues alerts so that sites are promptly reforested.

Regional ecological impacts of reforestation or afforestation are discussed as part of the master planning or Interim Forest Management Plan (IFMP) process.

Ecological plans for reforestation are bounded by the master plans, or in the Interim Forest Management Plan if a master plan is not in place; reforestation projects are discussed at annual integrated property meetings to assure that proposed reforestation meets property objectives.

Foresters and property managers carefully review every harvest with respect to invasive plants and possible regeneration concerns. In some cases, such as when this option is within silvicultural guidelines, regeneration treatments are delayed due in part to the widespread extent of invasives in the southern portion of the state. However, when regeneration is needed the Wisconsin DNR expends the resources necessary to achieve regeneration, sometimes at great cost.

Site visits confirmed that regen is addressed in the cutting notice and checked periodically for success after logging. Site visits also confirmed the protection of advances regen is also addressed in the cutting notice and monitored during logging.

2.1.2 Clear criteria to judge adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct understocked areas and achieve acceptable species composition and stocking rates for *planting*, *direct seeding* and *natural regeneration*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Regeneration guidelines are species specific and are outlined in the Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook. DNR Foresters use WisFIRS to code the stand and flag it for re-visit if they believe that natural regeneration may not be successful.

Confirmed by observation of oak regen occurring after a shelterwood cut.

2.1.3 Plantings of exotic tree species should minimize risk to native ecosystems.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: None planted.

2.1.4 Protection of desirable or planned advanced *natural regeneration* during harvest.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Much of the harvesting is done by experienced loggers using mechanized harvesting equipment. Felling of selected timber is mostly by processors, although hand-felling is not uncommon for the largest trees. Workers doing hand felling have chain saw training which includes directional felling techniques. In some cases, sales are set up with requirements for fixed-head processors, allowing the trees to be moved away from the advanced natural regeneration before they are allowed to fall to the ground. Yarding (forwarding) trails are planned, well-spaced, and reasonably narrow, further limiting damage to regeneration. Some sales contract restricts pole skidding or have winter-only restrictions to help protect natural regeneration from yarding damage.

Confirmed by observations during field site visits.

2.1.5 Afforestation programs that consider potential ecological impacts of the selection and *planting* of tree species in non-forested *landscapes*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Afforestation is done on old fields and local species are used.

Performance Measure 2.2

Program Participants shall *minimize* chemical use required to achieve management *objectives* while protecting employees, neighbors, the public and the environment, including *wildlife* and *aquatic habitats*. Indicators:

2.2.1 *Minimized* chemical use required to achieve management *objectives*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The Pesticide 2014_FSC spreadsheet indicates chemicals used and application rates. Review of the list did not identify any issues.

2.2.2 Use of least-toxic and narrowest-spectrum pesticides necessary to achieve management objectives.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Review of the aquatic pesticide table - FM_FRM_WI DNR AnADaUpdate_2017 final and State lands pesticide table FM_FRM_WI DNR AnADaUpdate_2017 final confirm appropriate herbicides were used.

2.2.3 Use of pesticides registered for the intended use and applied in accordance with label requirements.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Review of the aquatic pesticide table - FM_FRM_WI DNR AnADaUpdate_2017 final and State lands pesticide table FM_FRM_WI DNR AnADaUpdate_2017 final confirm appropriate herbicides were used.

The Department has extensive guidance in Manual codes and handbooks for chemical use, and reporting. The Department has formed a Pesticide Use Team to address issues with approval, reporting and training. DNR has an intranet site to guide DNR staff in the proper use of chemicals. Review of all chemical use for compliance (pesticide use reporting system) annually with follow-up as warranted. The Pesticide Use Team continues to address the improvement of the systems for pesticide approval, use, and reporting including training for staff and supervisors. Site visits did not identify any herbicide application issues.

2.2.4 The World Health Organization (WHO) type 1A and 1B pesticides shall be prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Review of the aquatic pesticide table - FM_FRM_WI DNR AnADaUpdate_2017 final and State lands pesticide table FM_FRM_WI DNR AnADaUpdate_2017 final confirm appropriate herbicides were used.

WIDNR's guidance document, FSC Highly Hazardous Pesticides and SFI Prohibited Pesticides prohibits the use of these type pesticides and specifically name this requirement.



2.2.5 Use of pesticides banned under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (2001) shall be prohibited.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Review of the aquatic pesticide table - FM_FRM_WI DNR AnADaUpdate_2017 final and State lands pesticide table FM_FRM_WI DNR AnADaUpdate_2017 final confirm appropriate herbicides were used.

WIDNR’s guidance document, FSC Highly Hazardous Pesticides and SFI Prohibited Pesticides prohibits the use of these type pesticides and specifically name this requirement.

2.2.6 Use of *integrated pest management* where feasible.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: WIDNR has pest management plans for the gypsy moth, emerald ash borer, beech bark disease.

IPM is the approach taken in this program, as documented in the plans: “Integrated pest management for the purpose of this Plan, is defined as follows: The maintenance of destructive agents, including insects, at tolerable levels, by the planned use of a variety of preventive, suppressive, or regulatory tactics and strategies that are ecologically and economically efficient and socially acceptable.”

Stands are regularly assessed formally (RECON) and informally for presence of insects or diseases, and treatments are applied in a timely manner before outbreaks widen. The initial treatment approach is commonly salvage or sanitation.

Conventional forest management, through stocking control and use of moderately short rotations, is designed to maintain healthy stands so as to minimize the need for chemical treatments. Stands visited were generally healthy and vigorous. Chemicals are only applied to address problems that can’t be resolved in other ways. For example, release using brush saws is considered before chemical release is prescribed.

For projects which include elements of site restoration and/or invasive control the practices employed also include blends of mechanical, fire, and chemical approaches. Through interviews it was apparent that managers are seeking approaches that minimize chemical use, but more work remains in many cases to find cost-effective and minimal-chemical approaches.

Extent and rates of applications as documented in written records reviewed were consistent with an integrated approach, in that the use is modest when the nature and extent of the certified land base is considered.

2.2.7 Supervision of forest chemical applications by state- or provincial-trained or certified applicators.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: DNR personnel interviewed involved in chemical applications provided evidence for how this requirement is met, including documentation of certification (cards) and use of certified contractors in all cases for restricted use chemicals, and use of certified applicators supervising employees who are not certified in some cases. Many work units report that all employees applying even general use pesticides have certification.

- 2.2.8 Use of management practices appropriate to the situation, for example:
- a. notification of adjoining landowners or nearby residents concerning applications and chemicals used;
 - b. appropriate multilingual signs or oral warnings;
 - c. control of public road access during and immediately after applications;
 - d. designation of streamside and other needed buffer strips;
 - e. use of positive shutoff and minimal-drift spray valves;
 - f. aerial application of forest chemicals parallel to buffer zones to *minimize* drift;
 - g. monitoring of water quality or safeguards to ensure proper equipment use and *protection* of streams, lakes and other water bodies;
 - h. appropriate transportation and storage of chemicals;
 - i. filing of required state or provincial reports; and/or
 - j. use of methods to ensure *protection* of *threatened and endangered* species.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Many of these techniques are required by law or regulation, and/or are specified in contracts for treatment. Handout /training aid: "Posting Requirement for Pesticide Applications" featured guidelines and examples, as well as sources for signs. In describing chemical applications field personnel often mentioned several of the listed chemical BMPs without prompting by auditors. In other cases, auditors interviewed field personnel specifically about procedures and methods; in all such cases, the responses indicated proper techniques.

Performance Measure 2.3

Program Participants shall implement forest management practices to protect and maintain forest and soil *productivity*. Indicators:

- 2.3.1 Process to identify soils vulnerable to compaction, and use of appropriate methods, including the use of soil maps where available, to avoid excessive soil disturbance.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Soil maps are contained in the WisFIRS system and are used in planning timber sales and other treatments. Foresters, biologists, and ecologists demonstrated strong knowledge of the soils, landforms, and bio-physical characteristics of lands in their units. Soils information is included in the sale narratives. All cutting notices identify the soil series occurring in the harvest area and note potential issues. Time of harvesting is sometimes restricted due to vulnerable soil types.

- 2.3.2 Use of erosion control measures to *minimize* the loss of soil and site *productivity*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Training in BMPs for water quality for field staff; staffs are trained. BMP monitoring on state lands was performed during the fall of 2013. BMP implementation monitoring addresses road construction and soil protection. Foresters, often supported by property managers from other disciplines, use soil and topographic maps, habitat type classifications, and/or field reviews as appropriate to identify soils vulnerable to compaction and use a variety of methods to avoid excessive soil disturbance, including designation of harvesting only with frozen ground or very dry conditions for all or a portion of a harvest area. Review of logging contracts, sale narratives, prospectuses, etc. document these measures. Confirmed by field observations the use of appropriate methods to avoid excessive soil disturbance, as soils in post-harvest stands showed quite limited and reasonable levels of soil compaction and disturbance. Foresters are trained in equipment impacts on soils and skid road layout. Site visits did not identify any erosion issues.

2.3.3 Post-harvest conditions conducive to maintaining site *productivity* (e.g., limited rutting, retained down woody debris, *minimized skid trails*).

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Confirmed by field observations. Volumes of post-harvest woody debris were consistent with soil protection and productivity; no harvests which included removal of tops and small branches for biomass were observed.

Biomass harvesting guidelines address sensitive soils issues. Revised biomass BMPs were published by the department in 2014.

Some cutting notices restrict biomass harvesting on fragile soils.

2.3.4 Retention of vigorous trees during partial harvesting, consistent with scientific silvicultural standards for the area.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The Silviculture handbook documents guidelines for tree retention in the various harvesting systems; site preparation is also addressed.

Field observations confirmed the retention of vigorous trees and the appropriate application of silviculture guidelines for removal of least vigorous and poorest quality trees and retention of the trees best adapted to the site as well as minimal damage to residuals.

For conventional silviculture, foresters consistently emphasized the retention of the most vigorous trees when marking stands; results of partial harvests were very good. For restoration-oriented harvests the retained trees met the ecological and biological goals (as appropriate), even if some of these trees were decidedly of poor form and vigor.

2.3.5 Criteria that address harvesting and site preparation to protect soil *productivity*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Wisconsin State BMPs for Water Quality (avoid excessive rutting) and Wisconsin DNR and/or individual county policies (defining excessive rutting) provide these criteria. Confirmed that "excessive rutting" definitions are in the many recent timber sale contracts that were reviewed.

Site visits did not observe any soil related issues.

2.3.6 Road construction and skidding layout to *minimize* impacts to soil *productivity*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: There is little construction of new permanent roads in the units visited. Loading decks, skid roads and trails on sales observed were planned in advance, with efforts to locate the main trails in the most appropriate locations and to space secondary trails widely to minimize impacts to soils and to maintain maximum practical distances from wetlands and watercourses to allow for natural filtering for any erosion that might occur.

The impacts on recreation trails by skid roads and trails are clearly a consideration during sale planning and implementation.

Foresters are trained in equipment impacts on soils and skid road layout.

Observation of new road constructed on the Dunnville WMA, tract 2-2015 confirmed BMPs were followed.

Performance Measure 2.4

Program Participants shall manage so as to protect forests from damaging agents, such as environmentally or economically undesirable wildfire, pests, diseases and *invasive exotic plants and animals*, to maintain and improve *long-term forest health, productivity and economic viability*. Indicators:

2.4.1 *Program* to protect forests from damaging agents.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: WIDNR website has a section on damaging agents that describes the agent’s life span and how to treat them. Invasive exotic plants inventory and management systems are being developed to implement new invasive exotic species laws (NR40). Revisions to the NR40 list were adopted in 2015. A statewide invasive species strategic plan was approved in 2013. The Department has an invasive species team that is working to implement NR40. Wisconsin DNR employs forest health specialists and makes their services readily available to the field units. Pest updates are published quarterly.

2.4.2 Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to *minimize* susceptibility to damaging agents.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: WIDNR website has a section on damaging agents that includes silvicultural guidelines. For conventional forest management goals, rotations are set short enough to prevent many pest problems (for example Jack Pine rotations of 50 years or Aspen rotations between 40 and 50 years). Forest management, through stocking control and use of moderately short rotations, is designed to maintaining healthy stands. Planting and partial harvest systems consider soil/site conditions before making decisions as to which species to plant or to favor in partial harvests.

2.4.3 Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control *programs*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The DNR works with other agencies to educate the public about pest prevention and continually conducts pest surveys. WI Dept. Ag, USDA Aphis and Forest Service, County park and forest programs and extension programs. The Department has an exemplary program across Bureaus to manage, control and eradicate invasive species. The DNR has a full-service fire prevention program including wildfire equipment and trained personnel. It also works with local fire departments as cooperators. The DNR issues prescribed burning permits throughout the state.

Performance Measure 2.5

Program Participants that deploy improved planting stock, including varietal seedlings, shall use best scientific methods. Indicator:

2.5.1 *Program* for appropriate research, testing, evaluation and deployment of *improved planting stock, including varietal seedlings*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: WIDNR has a seed orchard that uses improved planting stock and doesn’t use varietal seedlings; only local species are grown. The department’s Tree Improvement Specialist position has been vacant for several years; however, tree improvement program responsibilities have been covered through collaboration between nursery managers and the UW-Madison experts. The department has resized its nursery program from three to one state nurseries to match demand for planting stock.

Objective 3 **Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources**

To protect the water quality of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands* and other water bodies through meeting or exceeding *best management practices*.

Performance Measure 3.1

Program Participants shall meet or exceed all applicable federal, provincial, state and local water quality laws, and meet or exceed *best management practices* developed under Canadian or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency–approved water quality *programs*.

Indicators:

3.1.1 *Program* to implement federal, state or provincial water quality *best management practices* during all phases of management activities.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The Division of Forestry maintains a BMPs for Water Quality program, which includes training and monitoring. A variety of forms and systems are used to manage the harvesting process from planning through final inspection and sale closeout, including pre-harvest contractor meetings and interim inspection forms. BMPs are covered within many of these documents and are required by the logging contract. All jobs are planned and supervised by licensed foresters, and operated by trained loggers.

3.1.2 Contract provisions that specify conformance to *best management practices*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Clauses that specify conformance to best management practices were found in the timber sale contracts.

3.1.3 Monitoring of overall *best management practices* implementation.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The Division of Forestry maintains a BMPs for Water Quality program, which includes training and monitoring. Timber sale contracts contain provisions for conformance to BMPs and no BMP related issues except for the one described below were identified on any of the harvest sites visited.
NC: The interview with a logger on an active timber sale on the Dunnville WMA Tract 2-2015 indicated that the logger did not have access to a spill kit. This is a requirement specified in the WIBMP Manual, Chapter 9 pp 116.

Performance Measure 3.2

Program Participants shall implement water, *wetland* and *riparian protection* measures based on soil type, terrain, vegetation, ecological function, harvesting system, state *best management practices (BMPs)*, provincial guidelines and other applicable factors.

Indicators:

3.2.1 *Program* addressing management and *protection* of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, other water bodies and *riparian areas* during all phases of management, including the layout and construction of roads and *skid trails* to maintain water reach, flow and quality.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The Division of Forestry maintains a program for implementing BMPs for Water Quality that includes training and monitoring. Confirmed that this program continues to operate effectively by reviews of completed and partially completed timber harvests and road and trail improvement efforts. Water quality considerations including lakes or rivers potentially affected by the harvest are documented for each proposed harvest on a Form 2460-001 “Timber Sale Notice and Cutting Report” and this information is reflected in the harvesting requirements within the timber sale contracts. Sale and/or harvest unit boundaries are designed to avoid or buffer wetlands, stream, lakes, and other water bodies. Riparian buffers associated with harvests are shown on maps and marked on the ground.
Site visits did not identify any water quality issues.



3.2.2 Mapping of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands* and other water bodies as specified in state or provincial *best management practices* and, where appropriate, identification on the ground.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones are mapped in the GIS in separate layers and are marked on the ground (red paint on trees) near harvests as appropriate.

3.2.3 Document and implement plans to manage and protect rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, other water bodies and *riparian areas*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Pre-planning and ongoing harvest inspections and documentation. The Timber Sale and Cutting Report has water quality and ecological considerations.

3.2.4 Plans that address wet-weather events in order to maintain water quality (e.g., *forest inventory* systems, wet-weather tracts, definitions of acceptable operating conditions).

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Sensitive soils and wet weather restrictions are addressed in timber sale planning, contracting, and sale administration.

Objective 4 Conservation of Biological Diversity

To manage the quality and distribution of *wildlife habitats* and contribute to the *conservation of biological diversity* by developing and implementing *stand-* and *landscape-level* measures that promote a diversity of types of *habitat* and successional stages, and the *conservation* of forest plants and animals, including *aquatic species, as well as threatened and endangered species, Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old-growth forests* and ecologically important sites.

Performance Measure 4.1

Program Participants shall conserve biological diversity. Indicators:

4.1.1 Program to incorporate the *conservation of native biological diversity*, including species, *wildlife habitats* and ecological community types at *stand* and *landscape* levels.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: This is the purpose and function of the DNR. The Department has an exemplary program across Bureaus to maintain and improve native biological diversity including prairie and grassland establishment and management. The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin: An Assessment of Ecological Resources and a Guide to Planning Sustainable Management is a valuable tool for the department.

DNR maintains a comprehensive program to conserve native biological diversity that includes an inventory of stand and landscape level biodiversity features by trained professionals, biodiversity-related research by staff and in collaboration with academic institutions and other partners, a statewide Wildlife Action Plan that includes plans to manage species of greatest conservation need, and conservation of important areas of biological diversity through a system of parks, state forests, and natural areas.

4.1.2 Development of criteria and implementation of practices, as guided by regionally based *best scientific information*, to retain *stand-level wildlife habitat* elements such as snags, stumps, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees and nest trees.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Retention of stand-level wildlife habitat elements is guided by several documents that include specific criteria and practices for foresters to follow. WDNR's Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook also includes specific criteria for conserving stand-level wildlife elements. The Public Forest Lands Handbook includes guidelines for implementing the Forest Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program, which includes specific stand-level projects such as identification, selection, and management of snag, den, nest, or rendezvous sites. As a final example, the WDNR's Old-growth and Old Forests Handbook contains criteria and implementation practices for retaining wildlife habitat elements specifically associated with late successional and old growth forests. All of these documents are prepared by WDNR professionals with input from academic experts and professionals from partnering organizations. Criteria and implementation practices are kept current and represent the best available scientific information for the region. Foresters, biologists, and ecologists collaborate closely and demonstrate familiarity with these documents and field sites document adherence to the criteria and practices that they contain.

4.1.3 Document diversity of *forest cover types* and age or size classes at the individual ownership or forest tenure level, and where credible data are available, at the *landscape* scale. Working individually or collaboratively to support diversity of *native forest cover types* and age or size classes that enhance *biological diversity* at the *landscape* scale.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The main timber inventory is done through forest compartment reconnaissance (recon). Recon is a stand level assessment used to populate the Wisconsin Forest Inventory Reporting System (WisFIRS). Plots include measurements of species, volume (merchantable log tally and basal area reading), stocking, site index, timber quality, and general forest conditions. Recon is done on an as needed basis depending on several triggers (timber sale establishment, closeout, land acquisition, etc.) but no longer than every 20 years on state land.

DNR's Ecosystem Management Planning Team developed The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin: An Assessment of Ecological Resources and a Guide to Planning Sustainable Management that documents the diversity of forest types and natural communities at the regional level. The state has been divided into 16 ecological landscapes, or ecoregions, with similar ecology and management opportunities. It contains an assessment of conditions for the entire state, and for each ecoregion, broken down by dominant natural community type. In addition, the document includes an assessment of trends in ecological conditions, including those related to anticipated trends

associated with climate change.

Property Master Plans include site-specific information regarding natural communities and specific forest management plans describe stand-level size and age class characteristics. During development, Master Plans use information from *The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin*. Using the information contained in these and other documents, WDNR develops specific plans for conserving the full range of age and size classes for the forest types and natural communities that are native to Wisconsin. In addition, specific programs have been developed for retaining late successional and old growth stands as well as maintaining a component of the landscape in an early successional condition.

Site visits observed several instances of the WDNR working to maintain/improve biodiversity through harvest planning to encourage oak savannas and the planting of agricultural fields to prairie grasses and flowers.

4.1.4 *Program Participants* shall participate in or incorporate the results of state, provincial, or regional *conservation* planning and priority-setting efforts to conserve biological diversity and consider these efforts in forest management planning. Examples of credible priority-setting efforts include state *wildlife* action plans, state forest action plans, relevant *habitat conservation* plans or provincial *wildlife* recovery plans.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Wisconsin DNR has developed The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin, Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025, a ten-year Statewide Forest Action Plan 2010 (with a 2015 update), a Habitat Conservation Plan for the Karner Blue Butterfly, and the Fish, Wildlife and Habitat Management Plan 2015-2025. Master plans are developed for State forests and include forest management planning for conserving biological diversity.

4.1.5 *Program* to address *conservation* of known sites with viable occurrences of significant species of concern.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: DNR has a State Natural Areas Program and a Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) designed to specifically address conservation of known sites with viable occurrences of species of concern. Foresters conduct a review of the NHI and work with a biologist or ecologist if necessary. The Wildlife Action Plan is taken into consideration during forest management planning. WI DNR has also identified Important Bird Areas.

In addition to staff based in Madison, the WDNR Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation employs 8 regionally-based field ecologists to better fulfill the goals and objectives the Department has for identifying and conserving occurrences of rare, threatened, endangered or exemplary species or natural communities.

4.1.6 Identification and *protection* of *non-forested wetlands*, including bogs, fens and marshes, and *vernal pools* of ecological significance.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: During the Master Plan development process, non-forested wetlands are specifically considered as a forest cover type. Some regions are particularly rich with non-forested wetland areas such as The Sandhill-Meadow Valley Work Unit (which consists of three Wildlife Areas). Its Master Plan states, "The Work Unit's large wet-lands with open bogs, shrub swamps, impoundments and sedge meadows are of Upper Midwest/Regional Significance (Wildlife Action Plan 2005). The wetlands, part of a larger central Wisconsin landscape containing the highest concentration of wetlands in the state, play a key role in defining the properties from both an ecological and recreation standpoint."

Non-forested wetlands such as bogs, fens, and marshes are addressed as part of the Natural Heritage Inventory and State Natural Areas Program. These features are identified by trained ecologists during statewide, regional (i.e., landscape), property, and stand-level inventories and are protected as natural areas or special management areas. DNR manages an extensive array of natural areas that, among other things, include ecologically significant wetlands, bogs, fens, and marshes. In addition, The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin addresses these features. At the property and stand level, ecologists, biologists, and foresters identify and protect smaller wetlands and vernal (ephemeral) pools, as evidenced during site visits. DNR is developing a reference wetland project to identify high quality wetlands, of which some are already set aside in SNAs.



4.1.7 Participation in *programs* and demonstration of activities as appropriate to limit the introduction, spread and impact of *invasive exotic plants and animals* that directly threaten or are likely to threaten *native* plant and animal communities.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: DNR has a comprehensive program for identifying, controlling, and monitoring the occurrence of invasive exotic plants and animals that threaten the ecological integrity of the state’s ecosystems. See, for example, the Wisconsin Invasive Species Program Reports. The WDNR Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook specifically addresses upland invasive species and field foresters, biologists, and ecologists demonstrated expert knowledge of invasive exotic species management. Many of the field sites, for example, included some element of invasive exotic plants and WDNR staff identified the species and explained how control had been included in the management plan through harvest modification, mechanical or chemical treatment, or requiring pressure-washing logging equipment. The WDNR website contains current information for the public to promote the control of aquatic, terrestrial, and wetland invasive species and the Department maintains a staff of qualified professionals who focus exclusively on invasive species management.

4.1.8 Consider the role of natural disturbances, including the use of prescribed or natural fire where appropriate, and *forest health* threats in relation to *biological diversity* when developing forest management plans.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: WDNR considers the role of natural disturbance regimes in its statewide, landscape, property, and stand management plans and strives to maintain a natural distribution of stand types, age and size classes, and natural communities. Prescribed fire is an active part of the Department’s management program and is used to improve wildlife habitat, control invasive species, restore and maintain native plan communities, and reduce wildfire potential. Examples of such efforts include: creating and maintaining barrens, stimulating prairie grass growth and improving habitat for upland game and waterfowl; creating pockets of open water for waterfowl within cattail marshes (e.g., at Horicon Marsh); improving habitat for upland nesting birds; and helping to preserve grassland and savanna natural communities that were previously dependent on natural fires prior to European settlement. Prescribed burn plans are developed by trained professionals with multi-disciplinary input from ecologists, biologists, and foresters.

As an example, the Master Plan for the Sandhill-Meadow Valley Work Unit (which consists of three Wildlife Areas) specifically identifies periodic use of prescribed fire in the management the Barrens native community management area. On tours of the Dunnville Wildlife Area and the Hoffman Hills State Recreation Area use of prescribed fire was discussed. During a field visit on the Black River State Forest the forester was describing a treatment where she was trying to mimic blowdown. Coincidentally, the stand was also hit by a storm and experienced natural blowdown as well.

Confirmed by observation of prescribed fire to maintain oak savanna habitat type on the Tiffany WMA 5 Mile Bluff and on the Maiden Rock Bluff SNA prairies.

Performance Measure 4.2

Program Participants shall protect threatened and endangered species, Forests with Exceptional Conservation Values (FECV) and old-growth forests. Indicators:

4.2.1 Program to protect threatened and endangered species.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

4.2.2 Program to locate and protect known sites flora and fauna associated with viable occurrences of *critically imperiled* and *imperiled* species and communities also known as *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*. Plans for *protection* may be developed independently or collaboratively, and may include *Program Participant* management, cooperation with other stakeholders, or use of easements, *conservation* land sales, exchanges, or other *conservation* strategies.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:



4.2.3 Support of and participation in plans or *programs* for the *conservation of old-growth forests* in the region of ownership or forest tenure.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

Performance Measure 4.3

Program Participants shall manage ecologically important sites in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities. Indicators:

4.3.1 Use of information such as existing natural heritage data or expert advice in identifying or selecting ecologically important sites for *protection*.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

4.3.2 Appropriate mapping, cataloging and management of identified ecologically important sites.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

Performance Measure 4.4

Program Participants shall apply knowledge gained through research, science, technology and field experience to manage *wildlife habitat* and contribute to the *conservation of biological diversity*. Indicators:

4.4.1 Collection of information on *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* and other *biodiversity*-related data through *forest inventory* processes, mapping or participation in external *programs*, such as NatureServe, state or provincial heritage *programs*, or other credible systems. Such participation may include providing non-proprietary scientific information, time and assistance by staff, or in-kind or direct financial support.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

4.4.2 A methodology to incorporate research results and field applications of *biodiversity* and ecosystem research into forest management decisions.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:



Objective 5 Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits

To manage the visual impact of forest operations and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

Performance Measure 5.1

Program Participants shall manage the impact of harvesting on visual quality. Indicators:

5.1.1 Program to address visual quality management.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The DNR has developed its own aesthetics guidelines as part of the Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook. It involves assigning class codes to all timber sales as guidance to the foresters. The cutting notice has an aesthetics section.

Areas with special visual qualities can be protected through master and interim planning utilizing a land classification of "Scenic Resource Management Area" (NR44.06 (9)). In this zone, timber and other property management is required to be designed, to the extent possible, to minimize visual impacts. All foresters, as part of new forester training, are trained in visual quality management; see the department's Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook. Department staff, both property managers and foresters meet with affected neighboring land owners and affected publics to discuss the mitigation of negative visual impacts on a case by case basis. Areas with special visual qualities are identified in property master plans and in the WisFIRS forest reconnaissance system.

5.1.2 Incorporation of aesthetic considerations in harvesting, road, landing design and management, and other management activities where visual impacts are a concern.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: See 5.1.1. Site visits did not identify any aesthetic issues.

Performance Measure 5.2

Program Participants shall manage the size, shape and placement of clearcut harvests. Indicators:

5.2.1 Average size of clearcut harvest areas does not exceed 120 acres (50 hectares), except when necessary to meet regulatory requirements, achieve ecological objectives or to respond to forest health emergencies or other natural catastrophes.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Confirmed by field observations that most clearcuts are small; record review indicates average clearcut size for 2016 is 15 acres.

5.2.2 Documentation through internal records of clearcut size and the process for calculating average size.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Documentation is maintained in WisFIRS; which also calculates the average annual clearcut size.

Performance Measure 5.3

Program Participants shall adopt a green-up requirement or alternative methods that provide for visual quality. Indicators:

5.3.1 Program implementing the green-up requirement or alternative methods.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: WIDNR has an exemplary visual quality process. Green-requirements are not an issue because most of the hardwood cuts are intermediate and the aspen generally meets the height requirement within 1 year.

5.3.2 Harvest area tracking system to demonstrate conformance with the green-up requirement or alternative methods.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: WisFIRS, sale maps and GIS; review of adjacent stands during sale set up.



5.3.3 Trees in clearcut harvest areas are at least 3 years old or 5 feet (1.5 meters) high at the desired level of stocking before adjacent areas are clearcut, or as appropriate to address operational and economic considerations, alternative methods to reach the *performance measure* are utilized by the *Program Participant*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Green-requirements are not an issue because most of the hardwood cuts are intermediate and the aspen generally meets the height requirement within 1 year.

Performance Measure 5.4

Program Participants shall support and promote recreational opportunities for the public. Indicator:

5.4.1 Provide recreational opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management *objectives*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The Department provides ample recreational opportunities for the public. Including hunting, trails etc. Recreation opportunities are implicit to DNR’s mission. State Parks, Wildlife Areas, State Forests, fisheries properties and many other types of state owned forest lands are developed for a variety of developed and primitive recreation experiences. The Natural Resources Board has emphasized opening lands suitable for motorized access and the department is updating its road and trail inventory to identify additional opportunities for motorized public access. The Department has completed the Public Access Lands Atlas and its companion mapping application that is now available online (Public Access Lands Maps - Wisconsin DNR). The atlas highlights the significant increase in public access to Wisconsin lands made possible through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, as well as other lands open to the public for outdoor recreation. The Public Access Lands mapping application is a map-based system that allows you to locate and obtain information on public access properties. The department has developed a number of tools to enable the public to find state lands for specific recreation uses including: collaborated with Pocket Ranger to develop a mobile app, DNR managed lands mobile viewer (in development), dove field locations, mobile apps for fishing regulations, mobile apps for state parks and forests, social media, and parking area identification and signing. Site visits confirmed abundant recreational opportunities.



Objective 6 *Protection of Special Sites*

To manage lands that are geologically or *culturally important* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

Performance Measure 6.1

Program Participants shall identify *special sites* and manage them in a manner appropriate for their unique features. Indicators:

6.1.1 Use of information such as existing natural heritage data, expert advice or stakeholder consultation in identifying or selecting *special sites* for *protection*.

- N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

6.1.2 Appropriate mapping, cataloging and management of identified *special sites*.

- N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:



Objective 7 Efficient Use of Fiber Resources

To *minimize* waste and ensure the efficient use of fiber resources.

Performance Measure 7.1

Program Participants shall employ appropriate forest harvesting technology and in-woods manufacturing processes and practices to *minimize* waste and ensure efficient utilization of harvested trees, where consistent with other *SFI Standard objectives*. Indicator:

7.1.1 *Program* or monitoring system to ensure efficient utilization, which may include provisions to ensure:

- a. management of harvest residue (e.g., slash, limbs, tops) considers economic, social and environmental factors (e.g., organic and nutrient value to future forests and the potential of increased fuels build-up) and other utilization needs;
- b. training or incentives to encourage loggers to enhance utilization;
- c. exploration of markets for underutilized species and low-grade wood and alternative markets (e.g., bioenergy markets); or
- d. periodic inspections and reports noting utilization and product separation.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:



Objective 8 Recognize and Respect *Indigenous Peoples'* Rights

To recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples'* rights and traditional knowledge.

Performance Measure 8.1

Program Participants shall recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights. Indicator:

8.1.1 *Program Participants* will provide a written *policy* acknowledging a commitment to recognize and respect the rights of *Indigenous Peoples*.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

Performance Measure 8.2

Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall confer with affected *Indigenous Peoples* with respect to sustainable forest management practices. Indicator:

8.2.1 *Program* that includes communicating with affected *Indigenous Peoples* to enable *Program Participants* to:

- a. understand and respect traditional forest-related knowledge;
- b. identify and protect spiritually, historically, or culturally important sites;
- c. address the use of non-timber forest products of value to *Indigenous Peoples* in areas where *Program Participants* have management responsibilities on public lands; and
- d. respond to *Indigenous Peoples'* inquiries and concerns received.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

Performance Measure 8.3

Program Participants are encouraged to communicate with and shall respond to local *Indigenous Peoples* with respect to sustainable forest management practices on their private lands. Indicators:

8.3.1 *Program Participants* are aware of *traditional forest-related knowledge*, such as known cultural heritage sites, the use of wood in traditional buildings and crafts, and flora that may be used in cultural practices for food, ceremonies or medicine.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:

8.3.2 Respond to *Indigenous Peoples'* inquiries and concerns received.

- N/A
- Conforms
- Exceeds
- O.F.I.
- Minor NC
- Major NC

Audit Notes:



Objective 9 Legal and Regulatory Compliance

To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state and local laws and regulations.

Performance Measure 9.1

Program Participants shall comply with applicable federal, provincial, state and local *forestry* and related social and environmental laws and regulations. Indicators:

9.1.1 Access to relevant laws and regulations in appropriate locations.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

9.1.2 System to achieve compliance with applicable federal, provincial, state, or local laws and regulations.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

9.1.3 Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through *available regulatory action information*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

Performance Measure 9.2

Program Participants shall take appropriate steps to comply with all applicable social laws at the federal, provincial, state and local levels in the country in which the *Program Participant* operates. Indicators:

9.2.1 Written *policy* demonstrating commitment to comply with social laws, such as those covering civil rights, equal employment opportunities, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures, workers' compensation, *Indigenous Peoples'* rights, workers' and communities' right to know, prevailing wages, workers' right to organize, and occupational health and safety.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

9.2.2 *Forestry enterprises* will respect the rights of workers and labor representatives in a manner that encompasses the intent of the International Labor Organization (ILO) core conventions.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

Objective 10 Forestry Research, Science and Technology

To invest in *forestry* research, science and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based and broaden the awareness of *climate change* impacts on forests, *wildlife* and *biological diversity*.

Performance Measure 10.1

Program Participants shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, associations or other partners provide in-kind support or funding for forest research to improve *forest health*, *productivity* and sustainable management of forest resources, and the environmental benefits and performance of forest products. Indicators:

10.1.1 Financial or in-kind support of research to address questions of relevance in the region of operations. Examples could include, but are not limited to, areas of forest *productivity*, water quality, biodiversity, community issues, or similar areas which build broader understanding of the benefits and impacts of forest management.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

10.1.2 Research on genetically engineered trees via *forest tree biotechnology* shall adhere to all applicable federal, state, and provincial regulations and international protocols ratified by the United States and/or Canada depending on jurisdiction of management.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

Performance Measure 10.2

Program Participants shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, associations or other partners develop or use state, provincial or regional analyses in support of their *sustainable forestry programs*. Indicator:

10.2.1 Participation, individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* and/or associations at the national, state, provincial or regional level, in the development or use of some of the following:

- a. regeneration assessments;
- b. growth and drain assessments;
- c. *best management practices* implementation and conformance;
- d. *biodiversity conservation* information for family forest owners; and
- e. social, cultural or economic benefit assessments.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

Performance Measure 10.3

Program Participants shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, associations or other partners broaden the awareness of *climate change* impacts on forests, *wildlife* and *biological diversity*. Indicators:

10.3.1 Where available, monitor information generated from regional climate models on *long-term forest health*, *productivity* and *economic viability*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

10.3.2 *Program Participants* are knowledgeable about *climate change* impacts on *wildlife*, *wildlife habitats* and *conservation of biological diversity* through international, national, regional or local *programs*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:



Objective 11 Training and Education

To improve the implementation of *sustainable forestry* practices through appropriate training and education *programs*.

Performance Measure 11.1

Program Participants shall require appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities under the *SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard*. Indicators:

11.1.1 Written statement of commitment to the *SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard* communicated throughout the organization, particularly to facility and woodland managers, and field foresters.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

11.1.2 Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving *SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard objectives*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

11.1.3 Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

11.1.4 Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

11.1.5 *Program Participants* shall have written agreements for the use of *qualified logging professionals* and/or *certified logging professionals* (where available) and/or *wood producers* that have completed training *programs* and are recognized as *qualified logging professionals*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:



Performance Measure 11.2

Program Participants shall work individually and/or with *SFI Implementation Committees*, logging or forestry associations, or appropriate agencies or others in the *forestry* community to foster improvement in the professionalism of *wood producers*.

Indicators:

11.2.1 Participation in or support of *SFI Implementation Committees* to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for *wood producer* training courses and periodic continuing education that address:

- a. awareness of sustainable forestry principles and the SFI program;
- b. best management practices, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance and retirement;
- c. reforestation, invasive exotic plants and animals, forest resource conservation, aesthetics and special sites;
- d. awareness of responsibilities under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, the Canadian Species at Risk Act, and other measures to protect wildlife habitat (e.g., Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value);
- e. awareness of rare forested natural communities as identified by provincial or state agencies, or by credible organizations such as NatureServe, The Nature Conservancy, etc.
- f. logging safety;
- g. U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) regulations, wage and hour rules, and other provincial, state and local employment laws;
- h. transportation issues;
- i. business management;
- j. public policy and outreach; and
- k. awareness of emerging technologies.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

11.2.2 The *SIC*-approved *wood producer* training programs shall have a continuing education component with coursework that supports the current training programs, safety and the principles of sustainable forestry.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

11.2.3 Participation in or support of *SFI Implementation Committees* to establish criteria for recognition of logger certification programs, where they exist, that include:

- a. completion of *SFI Implementation Committee* recognized logger training programs and meeting continuing education requirements of the training program;
- b. independent in-the-forest verification of conformance with the logger certification program standards;
- c. compliance with all applicable laws and regulations including responsibilities under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, the Canadian Species at Risk Act and other measures to protect wildlife habitat;
- d. use of best management practices to protect water quality;
- e. logging safety;
- f. compliance with acceptable silviculture and utilization standards;
- g. aesthetic management techniques employed where applicable; and
- h. adherence to a management or harvest plan that is site specific and agreed to by the forest landowner.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

Objective 12 Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* through public outreach, education, and involvement, and to support the efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees*.

Performance Measure 12.1

Program Participants shall support and promote efforts by consulting foresters, state, provincial and federal agencies, state or local groups, professional societies, *conservation* organizations, *Indigenous Peoples* and governments, community groups, sporting organizations, labor, universities, extension agencies, the *American Tree Farm System*® and/or other landowner cooperative *programs* to apply *principles* of sustainable forest management. Indicators:

12.1.1 Support, including financial, for efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

12.1.2 Support, individually or collaboratively, education and outreach to forest landowners describing the importance and providing implementation guidance on:

- a. best management practices;
- b. reforestation and afforestation;
- c. visual quality management;
- d. conservation objectives, such as critical wildlife habitat elements, biodiversity, threatened and endangered species, and Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value;
- e. management of harvest residue (e.g., slash, limbs, tops) considers economic, social, environmental factors (e.g., organic and nutrient value to future forests) and other utilization needs;
- f. control of invasive exotic plants and animals;
- g. characteristics of *special sites*; and
- h. reduction of wildfire risk.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

12.1.3 Participation in efforts to support or promote *conservation* of managed forests through voluntary market-based incentive *programs* such as current-use taxation *programs*, *Forest Legacy Program* or *conservation* easements.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

Performance Measure 12.2

Program Participants shall support and promote, at the state, provincial or other appropriate levels, mechanisms for public outreach, education and involvement related to sustainable forest management. Indicator:

12.2.1 Periodic educational opportunities promoting *sustainable forestry*, such as

- a. field tours, seminars, websites, webinars or workshops;
- b. educational trips;
- c. self-guided forest management trails;
- d. publication of articles, educational pamphlets or newsletters; or
- e. support for state, provincial, and local *forestry* organizations and soil and water *conservation* districts.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:



Performance Measure 12.3

Program Participants shall establish, at the state, provincial, or other appropriate levels, procedures to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, unions, the public or other *Program Participants* regarding practices that appear inconsistent with the *SFI Standard principles and objectives*. Indicators:

12.3.1 Support for *SFI Implementation Committees* (e.g., toll-free numbers and other efforts) to address concerns about apparent nonconforming practices.

- N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

12.3.2 Process to receive and respond to public inquiries. *SFI Implementation Committees* shall submit data annually to *SFI Inc.* regarding concerns received and responses.

- N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:



Objective 13 Public Land Management Responsibilities

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on *public lands*.

Performance Measure 13.1

Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on *public lands* shall participate in the development of *public land* planning and management processes. Indicators:

13.1.1 Involvement in *public land* planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:

13.1.2 Appropriate contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal or independent collaboration.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes:



Objective 14 Communications and Public Reporting

To increase transparency and to annually report progress on conformance with the *SFI Forest Management Standard*.

Performance Measure 14.1

A *Program Participant* shall provide a summary audit report, prepared by the *certification body*, to *SFI Inc.* after the successful completion of a certification, recertification or surveillance audit to the *SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard*. Indicator:

- 14.1.1 The summary audit report submitted by the *Program Participant* (one copy must be in English), shall include, at a minimum,
- a. a description of the audit process, *objectives* and scope;
 - b. a description of substitute *indicators*, if any, used in the audit and a rationale for each;
 - c. the name of *Program Participant* that was audited, including its *SFI* representative;
 - d. a general description of the *Program Participant's* forestland included in the audit;
 - e. the name of the *certification body* and *lead auditor* (names of the *audit team* members, including *technical experts* may be included at the discretion of the *audit team* and *Program Participant*);
 - f. the dates the audit was conducted and completed;
 - g. a summary of the findings, including general descriptions of evidence of conformity and any nonconformities and corrective action plans to address them, opportunities for improvement, and exceptional practices; and
 - h. the certification decision.

The summary audit report will be posted on the *SFI Inc.* website (www.sfiprogram.org) for public review.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Confirmed by review of the SFI Inc. website that the 2016 report is present.

Performance Measure 14.2

Program Participants shall report annually to SFI Inc. on their conformance with the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard. Indicators:

14.2.1 Prompt response to the *SFI* annual progress report survey.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Confirmed by review of "last Updated" field that that the report was submitted March 30, 2017.

14.2.2 Record keeping for all the categories of information needed for *SFI* annual progress report surveys.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: WisFIRs system tracks all harvests; other systems are used to track contributions, etc.

The review of documents associated with selected field sites helped audit team assess recordkeeping. All records requested were provided quickly.

Confirmed by review of 2016 APR.

14.2.3 Maintenance of copies of past survey reports to document progress and improvements to demonstrate conformance to the *SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Hard copies of past reports maintained by Mark Heyde.

Objective 15 Management Review and Continual Improvement

To promote continual improvement in the practice of *sustainable forestry* by conducting a management review and monitoring performance.

Performance Measure 15.1

Program Participants shall establish a management review system to examine findings and progress in implementing the *SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard*, to make appropriate improvements in *programs*, and to inform their employees of changes.

Indicators:

15.1.1 System to review commitments, *programs* and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The department maintains an Integrated Certification Implementation Team (ICIT).

A primary role of ICIT is the review of commitments, programs and procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of SFI standards implementation and reporting to management.

The results of the department’s response to CAR requests as well as the result of internal monitoring are discussed with senior management at the annual review.

The DNR’s Integrated Certification Implementation Team (ICIT) includes a representative from each DNR program. The team meets regularly, as confirmed by ICIT Meeting Minutes from May 6, 2013. “In August 2012, the Forestry and Land Division administrators confirmed that the charge of the Integrated Certification Implementation Team includes:

- a. Coordination of annual certification audits.
- b. Coordinated response to Corrective Action Requests, Observations, and Opportunities for Improvement.
- c. Internal monitoring of DNR policies and procedures related to forest certification.
- d. Annual certification review with senior management.”

Team leaders and Area Foresters and other supervisors work closely with field personnel to ensure that actions meet program guidance, manual codes, scientific principles, and legal requirements, all of which are consistent with the SFI requirements. Most projects require review and sign-off by at least one such supervisory personnel. Interviews confirmed that such managers conduct regular field reviews as well.

15.1.2 System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving *SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard objectives and performance measures*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: The system includes regular meetings of the ICIT, periodic BMP monitoring on state, county and private lands, a rigorous internal audit of pesticide use, the use of WisFIRS to tract harvest and regeneration and a process to gather information for completing the APR.

15.1.3 Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve conformance to the *SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard*.

N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Audit Notes: Agenda and memo for DNR’s annual senior management review, August 14, 2017 and the supporting documentation for this management review were the key evidence of conformance with this requirement. The review was structured to focus on issues related to the third-party audit findings from the 2016 audit as well as the 2017 internal audit findings and the following major program changes, initiatives and highlights as it relates to forest certification: agency level, internal services division, fish, wildlife and parks division and the forestry division.

(End SFI Forest Management Checklist)



Audit itinerary

Audit dates	21-25 August 2017
Audit logistics	Travel: Audit team arrives Monday, 21 August in Black River, Comfort Inn and Suites.

Tuesday Aug 22	
12:45 – 4:30 Teams A, B and C – Black River SF	
BLACK RIVER STATE FOREST Tract 6-17, White Pine, Active.	Jennifer Boice – Forester and Peter Bakken – Property Manager Active pine group selection. 19 acres. This sale was an experiment to begin converting a two-aged white pine stand to an uneven aged stand using patch cut and shelterwood. Stand age ~80 years, thinned 10 years ago. Harvest to release some 10-year old understory and open up areas for a third class of white pine. Had blowdown event while the plan was open and were able to salvage those trees in a timely manner resulting in good quality timber removal. ATV trail along one edge. Logger interview conducted.
BLACK RIVER STATE FOREST Tract 6-15, Red and White Pine, Completed.	Jennifer Boice – Forester and Peter Bakken – Property Manager Completed pine thinning. 68 acres. Red and white pine thinning to increase tree growth and quality. Harvest completed summer 2015. Third thinning on the stand. Sale had a historic site of an old logging camp -- boundaries were well marked for an EEZ.
Team A – Norman Boatwright, Black River State Forest	
Team Members	Mark Heyde - Certification Coordinator, Heather Berklund - Deputy Division Administrator, Joe Wyss - Forestry Technician, Andy Sorenson - Forestry Team Leader, Pete Duerkop - Conservation Biologist, Scott Roepke - Wildlife Biologist and Peter Bakken - Forest Superintendent
Black River State Forest active red pine thinning. Tract 6-17 10 acres	Red pine 3 rd thin to release some 10-year old regen and create open areas for a 3 rd age class. No issues. Reviewed 2010 Black River State Forest Master Plan.
BRSF Red pine 2 nd thin. Tract 6-15. 68 acres	Good stocking and with minimal damage to residuals. An old logging camp was identified during the marking and was marked out. No issues.
BRSF Smrekar hike/bike trail	Very nice lodge with water, restrooms and a fire place with 12 miles of trail maintained by DNR.
BRSF complete timber sale (unscheduled visit)	Part of the Ketchum Creek Pines State Natural Area. Very old natural red/white pine stand with a complete harvest to open areas for regen. Good white pine, white oak and maple regen. No issues.
BRSF marked timber sale on Tract 9-17 150 acres	Red/white pine 1 st thin and jack pine final harvest. Well-marked thinning. Observed a state/federal threatened species – the Mississauga rattlesnake. No issues.
BRST Final harvest. Tract 5-16 65 acres	Oak/red pine stand final harvest leaving red pine group and red pine/oak single tree retention. Good aspen, oak and maple regen with no issues.
BRSF Jack pine final harvest. Tract 14-17	Not cut jack pine final harvest with red/white pine retention. The goal is to promote white pine regen as the site is out of the normal jack pine area. No issues.



43 acres	
Weber Flowage-Jackson County (unscheduled visit)	16-acre lake that's a part of a water system that connects several flowages east of the BRSF.
Team B – Ruthann Shulte, Monroe County Other State Lands	
MEADOW VALLEY WILDLIFE AREA Tract 6-13, Oak/Jack Pine, Active	<p>Mark Chryst – Forester and Neal Paisley – Property Manager</p> <p>Objective of generating high quality game and nongame habitat. 116 acres. Regeneration harvest leaving white oak, scattered red pine and white pine. Leave snags and den trees that are not safety hazard. Natural regeneration. Observed heavy oak undergrowth. Two harvest units – one completed and one active. Land owned by federal government and managed by WI DNR. Meadow Valley is one of three wildlife areas within a work unit that hires a seasonal employee specifically to work on invasives 70-80% under the supervision of a tech. Logger interview conducted with Ronny Murphy of Fike Forest Products.</p>
SCATTERED FOREST LANDS - MONROE CTY. Tract 3-17, Oak and Jack Pine, Marked	<p>Sean Davison – Forester and Anna Jahns – Wildlife</p> <p>Three different prescriptions in sale: Jack pine clearcut, oak coppice, and oak shelterwood. 44 acres. Objective to thin stands to increase growth and vigor and create general wildlife habitat. Create a diversity of age, structure, and species. As with many properties, forester and wildlife biologist worked together on developing a plan for the property. The wildlife area shares a boundary with Fort McCoy. A previously undocumented old foundation was found on in the sale area and was reported to the archeologist, who accessed the area and prescribed treatment. Sale boundaries were well marked.</p>
LA CROSSE RIVER FISHERY AREA Tract 3-16, Red Pine, Sale Open	<p>Sean Davison – Forester and Kirk Olson – Property Manager</p> <p>Red pine stands with an area of hardwood. 64 acres. Red pine thinning and hardwood coppice. This is the third thinning for Area 2. Area 1 has not been thinned because of access issues across private land. Forester worked with neighboring landowner to gain access for this sale under mutually favorable conditions -- winter timber harvest after soybean field is harvested. Sale area includes gas line that was taken into consideration.</p>
Team C – Beth Jacqmain, Jackson and Trempealeau Other State Lands	
HALLS (STOCKWELL) CREEK FISHERY AREA Tract 14-1, Red Pine, Completed	<p>Eric Kramer – Fish Technician</p> <p>Completed pine thinning. 59 acres. Red pine to be thinned, hardwood species in nearby stand was clearcut to regenerate through sprouting. Annosum root rot was a concern at site and treated by a Certified Pesticide Applicator. Inspected Stockwell Creek, Class 2 trout stream. Forester worked with Fisheries staff to install “breaker rock” for creek protection. Discussions: Integrated Property Management meetings (IPMM), Halls (Stockwell) Creek Fishery Area Interim forest management plan (2016) examined and discussed.</p>
BEAVER CREEK REARING STATION Tract 16-1	<p>Set up harvest on 34 acres in 3 blocks. Block examined with primarily oak and some aspen, red maple, basswood, and cherry. Reserves trees maintained. Sold not yet cut. Pheasant stocking in adjacent wildlife management area. Nearby Beaver Creek Rearing station. Nearby stocking pond which fills quota state-wide. Adjacency planning considerations. Discussion: Interim FMPs, IPMM, wildlife land acquisitions strategy.</p>
REM-BUFFALO RIVER Tract 16-2	<p>Red pine and balsam fir planted sites totaling 13 acres including a 2-acre patch cut of oak. Planning Docs reviewed:</p> <p>Buffalo River Fishery Area, Timber Sales Contract, 2400-005. Timber Sale Bid (2400-049), Timber Sale Transaction/Remittance/Invoice (2460-003), 2460 (Tract 6211-2-2016), Prospectus (Terms, Special Conditions, map). Buffalo River Fishery Area Interim Forest Management Plan examined. Also examined North Branch Trempealeau River Fishery Area and Jackson County Pond and Lake Properties Interim FMPs.</p>
Wed August 23	



8:00 – 4:00	
Team A – Norman Boatwright, Buffalo and Pepin County Other State Lands	
Team Members	Justin Kania - Forester, Mark Rasmussen - Wildlife Biologist, Dean Edlin - Ecologist, Andy Storenson – Forestry Team Leader and Mary Ann Buenzow - District Forestry Leader
BIG SWAMP WILDLIFE AREA Tract 17-2, Central Hardwoods and Oak 42 acres	Not yet cut. 2 stands: 1) Declining mature oak/maple stand with shelterwood cut with single tree retention, 12 acres. 2) Uneven aged northern hardwood stand improvement cut removing the declining, lower quality and less desirable trees, 30 acres. No issues.
Tiffany WMA (unscheduled)	Viewed the WMA across the Chippewa River from boat landing. Wind damage from straight line winds and Tornado. Due to flooding, haven't been able to get to the site to access damage and began salvage sale.
Tiffany WMA Tract 17-1 23 acres	Not yet cut regeneration harvest/storm salvage in mixed hardwood. Good job marking. Harvest restrictions timing wise for oak wilt, woodland bird nesting. Contract also contains a clause for timing restriction if the Massasauga rattlesnake is federally listed (it is). No issues. Reviewed 2010 Lower Chippewa River Properties Master Plan.
Tiffany WMA (unscheduled)	Not sold tornado salvage along Chippewa River. Well-marked with seasonal harvest restrictions. No issues.
Tiffany WMA Tract 1-16, Oak, Active	Dropped because vehicle got stuck!
Tiffany WMA 5 Mile Bluff (unscheduled)	Beautiful 800' bluff overlooking the confluence of the Mississippi and Chippewa Rivers. Oak forest/prairie burned every 2 years. Timber rattle snake nursery area with a large flat rock. Observed 4 large female snakes sunning on rock.
Tiffany WMA Tract 1-17, Chippewa River Bottomland Hardwoods sold not cut 23 acres	Regen harvest/storm salvage with take trees marked. Goal is to promote the regen of a mixed bottomland hardwood stand.
Maiden Rock Bluff SNA Completed Sale 77 acres	<p>Much of this tract is former field converted to prairie by the DNR. Stand 1 goal is to convert central hardwood to an oak savanna or native prairie. Review of old aerial photo confirms the area was an oak savanna.</p> <p>The western portion of the SNA has a limestone cliff that faces on a bluff high above the Mississippi River overlooking Lake Pepin. Extending for nearly a mile, the 400-foot high bluff is especially noteworthy for the presence of nesting peregrine falcons, a state-endangered species. The cliff is one of only six bluffs on the Mississippi River where peregrines are successfully nesting on natural substrate. Representative cliff species include red cedar aged at 250 years of age, hairbell, slender lip fern, smooth cliff brake, slender cliff brake, white-flowered leaf-cup, and plains muhly grass. The open cliff and adjacent narrow band of dry prairie provide habitat for several rare plant species including cliff goldenrod (<i>Solidago sciaphila</i>), dragon wormwood (<i>Artemisia dranunculus</i>), and prairie sagebrush (<i>A. frigida</i>). Many dry prairie species are also present including little bluestem, wild bergamot, columbine, leadplant, mountain mint, alumroot, pasqueflower and silky aster.</p> <p>Stand 2 was an aspen regen cut. Observed successful regen.</p> <p>Documents reviewed included the IPMP for the SNA written prior to harvest, the Site-Specific Management Sheet Tier-3 Resource Management Property Plan written after the harvest and the Timber Sales Contract.</p>
Team B – Ruthann Shulte, Dunn and St. Croix County Other State Lands	
DUNNVILLE WILDLIFE AREA Tract 2-2016, Bottomland Hardwood, Marked	Rob Strand – Forester and Jess Carstens – Property Manager Low grade bottomland hardwood of variable density. Stand is an island surrounded by wetlands slough. About 60-year old stand with scattered aspen. Remove everything 1" and



	larger to increase the vigor of the stand. Goal to regenerate a young, dense stand of early/mid successional lowland hardwoods with aspen and birch since most forests of Dunnville are transitioning to later successional species. Winter harvest across frozen wetland. The stand has not been managed because of poor access. Entering now because of an opportunity to “piggy back” with a project on adjoining land.
DUNNVILLE WILDLIFE AREA Tract 2-2013 (add on), Hazard tree removal from Red Cedar Trail, Harvested	Rob Strand – Forester and Jess Carstens – Property Manager The Red Cedar Trail bisects the Dunnville Wildlife Area. The trail is a well-used converted rail-to-trail that was built in 1978. Maintenance is a difficult issue due to many hazardous and blowdown trees after storms. Took advantage of a harvest in an adjacent area and offered an additional sale to experiment with removing potential hazard trees and blowdown along trail for about 1 mile. The concept was to reduce maintenance needs by removing hazardous trees. This has seemed to be successful as less maintenance has been needed since the harvest.
DUNNVILLE WILDLIFE AREA Tract 2-2013, Bottomland Hardwood, Harvested	Rob Strand – Forester and Jess Carstens – Property Manager Two units – one older bottomland hardwood stand, one oak stand. Stands had not been managed for 50-60 years. On the hardwood stand, thinning/group selection for stand improvement leave the larger trees and remove the lower quality trees. Followed big tree silviculture guidelines. Natural regeneration. Will return in about 15 years for another thinning depending on stand biological maturity. On the oak savanna area, clearcut with reserves and natural regeneration.
DUNNVILLE WILDLIFE AREA Prescribed Burn at Dunnville Road South	Jess Carstens – Property Manager Remnant prairie restoration of about 100 acres. Old oak woodlot along edges. Goal was to restore oak savanna and prairie. Historically the oaks along the edge of the prairie were thinned to leave burr oaks to recreate oak savanna. The previously harvested area was mowed in 2016. Prairie has been burned for the past four years. Burn plan reviewed.
DUNNVILLE WILDLIFE AREA Tract 2-2015, Oak and White Pine, Active	Rob Strand – Forester Primary oak stand is 90-100 years old and black oaks are nearing maturity. 110 acres. Red Cedar Trail and Red Cedar River adjacent to sale so harvest boundaries were intentionally set back from both. A no-cut island was left on top of the highest hill to mitigate visual impacts seen from the river and highway 25 west of the river. Thinning/group selection in Area 1 and clearcut regeneration with reserves in Area 2. Scattered large diameter, large crowned white oaks marked as reserve trees. All white pine left including approximate 15-acre patch. Big tree, extended rotation silviculture to retain the oak forest type is the long-term goal for the site as well as retain and perpetuate white pine. Natural regen planned for clearcut. Road building needed for sale that will also function for future access. Worked with County Conservation engineer on road/eroded gully issue. Logger interview conducted with Mike Mason of Mason Forest Products working on a harvest contracted to Theodore Strzok. Logger did not have a spill kit on-site.
HOFFMAN HILLS STATE RECREATION AREA Tract 3-2014, Aspen and Oak, Completed	Rob Strand – Forester and Calvin Kunkle – Property Manager Aspen and Oak. 20 acres total. Harvest adjacent to trails completed summer of 2015. Aspen regeneration, small oak savanna restoration component, and trail maintenance. Burn plan developed to address thick regeneration. Harvest provided public education opportunities regarding forest management due to its location in recreation area. Project is a good example of collaboration and creative planning to achieve multiple objectives for the property. Property was donated to the State and was developed in the late 1980s.
BOLEN CREEK FISHERY AREA Tract 4-2016, Aspen, Marked.	Rob Strand – Forester and Barbara Scott – Property Manager Bottomland hardwood and aspen acquired in the 1960s. Never harvested. 20 acres. Clearcut harvest for aspen regeneration, overstory removal for swamp hardwood regeneration. Winter only harvest due to need for frozen ground. Observed marked sale boundary around



	RMZs on Bolen Creek (Brook Trout stream) and small tributary. Natural regen planned.
CYLON WILDLIFE AREA Tract 1-2017, Red Pine unit, White Spruce unit, Open	Rob Strand – Forester and Ryan Haffelle – Property Manager Two distinct units. One unit of 50-year old not previously harvested red pine. Overstory removal to pre-salvage a declining stand, convert to hardwood type, harvested last year. Retained a few higher quality red pine as well as oak and aspen in the stand. Natural regeneration. The other unit selection thinning on an old white spruce plantation, marked not yet harvested. Land acquired in the 1950s/60s. First intermediate treatment of stand. Goal of species and habitat diversity.
CYCLON STATE NATURAL AREA	Rob Strand – Forester and Ryan Haffelle – Property Manager Toured one of four State Natural Areas in the Cyclon Wildlife Area. The stand is a forest community representative of the area. Bottomlands hardwoods with a large white pine component. Prescription is passive management.
CYLON WILDLIFE AREA Tract 1-2014, Aspen with some White Pine and Red Pine, Open partially harvested	Rob Strand – Forester and Ryan Haffelle – Property Manager Aspen, 87 acres regeneration harvest. White pine, 10 acres thinning. Red pine (old plantation), 2-acre salvage/conversion cut. Opportunity to regenerate young aspen and early successional forest on a property that has significant acreage of over-mature, declining aspen stands. Natural regen planned. Biomass sale. Cherry regeneration observed in white pine portion.
Team C – Beth Jacquain, Eau Claire and Chippewa County Other State Lands	
AUGUSTA WILDLIFE AREA Tract 1-15	Oak, aspen, hardwood stands totaling 59 acres in a newly designated Pine Barrens management area. Conversion project involving all stem removal >2” diameter to biomass, to manage under prescribed burn to maintain as pine barren ecosystem. Reviewed IFMP (2013). Designed to complement a nearby sedge meadow to create one continuous open habitat. Funding for project from Turkey Stamp Program, farming grants, and pheasant grants. Discussion: prioritization of WL projects under new realignment.
AUGUSTA WILDLIFE AREA Brush mowing	Brush removal project part of the overall pine barrens management, adjacent to harvest in 15-1. Remnant prairie site has been identified for expansion. Being managed in conjunction with and to be joined with 15-1.
AUGUSTA WILDLIFE AREA Tract 1-16	Red pine improvement thinning in 2 acres. No Annosum. Maintaining red pine component in the area.
HALLIE MARSH WILDLIFE AREA	Grassland conversion project, 6 acres. Clearcut to convert to grassland for a variety of wildlife species of interest. One species of interest was Henslow’s Sparrow. Avian survey done in 2013 prior to habitat conversion. 2016 resurvey showed increase in Henslow’s Sparrow. Funding sources included a variety of wildlife non-profit organizations, state stamp programs, as well as federal grants. Discussions around invasives such as buckthorn and spotted knapweed confirming training and knowledge to implement invasive management plans.
LAKE WISSOTA STATE PARK Tract 2-14	Red pine plantation, 41 acres, thinning down to 100 sq. ft. basal area, marked tree cut.
TOM LAWIN WILDLIFE AREA Tract 1-15	Aspen clearcut, 40 acres. Dry, frozen ground only. Green tree retention. IFMP reviewed. Spray treatment for Augusta knapweed in 2016 prescription reviewed. Entire prescription composed of a collection of documents including: Chemical Use Approval (FRM 4200-009), maps, and Pesticide Use Report. Interviews confirmed that other alternatives were considered and spraying was targeted.
TOM LAWIN WILDLIFE AREA, DIRECT SEEDING PROJECT	Red oak direct seeding in an old field for restoration in 2000, about 4 acres. Some spruce planted as well.
SAND CREEK FISHERY AREA Tract 1-15	Objective to retain and enhance an older, super-dominant, native white pine stand, about 100 years old, of 40-acre older white pine. Removed scattered 70-year old sub-dominant



	oak, maple, and aspen to regenerate thus thinning the white pine stand.
Thursday Aug 24	
8:00 – 4:00 Team A – Noman, Boatwright, La Crosse County Other State Lands and Coulee Experimental State Forest	
Team Members	Kevin Schilling – Forester, Greg Mitchel - Area Forestry Leader, Greg Edge – Silviculturist and Ron Lichtie - Wildlife Biologist
Van Loon WMA 1-16 not sold	2 stands: 1) red pine 1 st thin with haul corridors and 2) bottomland hardwood stand with a stand improvement cut and patch regen cuts. Season harvesting restrictions die to NHI data. No issues.
McGilvray Road Bridges (unscheduled)	County Rd across the Van Loon WMA built in 1930's with 7 bridges. County abandoned road and DNR now maintains it. On the National Historic Register.
Coulee Experimental Forest Tract 3-14	Firewood sale after hardwood harvest with no issues.
Coulee Experimental Forest Tract 2-15 54 acres, not sold	Red Pine 2 nd thin on hilltop with good road access. Marked cut trees; good residual sticking and no issues.
Coulee Experimental Forest Tract 1-14 86 acres, not sold	2 stands: 1) red pine 2 nd thin with cut trees marked – good residual stocking. Will have an intermittent stream crossing using wooden mats; 2) aspen regen cut with group retention and no issues.
Coulee Experimental Forest Tract 2-16 52 acres, sold-not cut	Sale is in the Southwest Russian Coulee Woods Native Community Management Area. Unusual prescription with removing low quality and declining trees to allow the stand to convert to an all aged condition. Cut trees marked with good residual stocking. No issues.
Team B – Ruthann Shulte,	
MEADOW VALLEY WILDLIFE AREA Tract 2-14, Oak, Completed	Mark Chryst – Forester, Neal Paisely – Property Supervisor, and Wayne Hall – Wildlife Primarily Oak with secondary Jack pine component and pockets of red and white pine. Harvest conducted a year ago. Regen harvest with some thinning. Most red and white pine retained as well as 2-3 mature oak per acre where present. Regen from seed, stump sprouting, and advance regeneration. Goal of early successional habitat for wildlife habitat. High potential for Karner Blue Butterfly (KBB). Survey for KBB and its habitat, significant clumps of lupine, were conducted -- no occurrences were detected.
MEADOW VALLEY WILDLIFE AREA Tract 3-16, White/Red Pine, Marked Kingston Old Forest Native Community Management Area (SNA)	Mark Chryst – Forester, Neal Paisely – Property Supervisor, and Wayne Hall – Wildlife The area toured was primarily in an old white and red pine plantation that is not typical of the surrounding old forest natural stand. Harvest will be a very light thin to improve stand quality to continue to enhance the old forest and move area with pine plantation to older successional species. Area includes a primitive camping area open during hunting seasons. Sale will also improve camping opportunities.
MEADOW VALLEY WILDLIFE AREA Tract 5-15, Oak/Aspen, Marked	Mark Chryst – Forester, Neal Paisely – Property Supervisor, and Wayne Hall – Wildlife Oak, Jack Pine, and Red Maple stand primary components. Retention of all White Oak, White Pine, Tamarack, River Birch, and Red Pine. Natural regeneration of Oak, Aspen, and Jack Pine is the primary objective. No known management of this area in the past.
MEADOW VALLEY WILDLIFE AREA Tract MWVA 2920, Red Pine, Completed	Mark Chryst – Forester, Neal Paisely – Property Supervisor, and Wayne Hall – Wildlife Completed Barrens development. This shows the “after” example compared to marked example in the next site. Thick natural oak regeneration present. Potential Barrens development areas are determined based on the soil type (Friendship Sand) on which lupine grows and creates habitat for Karner Blue Butterfly. Surveys are conducted for both lupine and Karner Blue Butterfly in appropriate circumstances. Have found lupine colonizing this post-harvest area.



MEADOW VALLEY WILDLIFE AREA Tract 3-15, Oak/Jack Pine, Marked	Mark Chryst – Forester, Neal Paisely – Property Supervisor, and Wayne Hall – Wildlife Oak/Jack Pine stand marked for Barrens development plan. Prospectus was issued as biomass harvest since prescribed fire is planned for Barrens maintenance. Natural regen planned. Witnessed boundary around cultural site.
MEADOW VALLEY WILDLIFE AREA Tract 2-15, Red Pine, one unit completed, one unit marked	Mark Chryst – Forester, Neal Paisely – Property Supervisor, and Wayne Hall – Wildlife Harvest completed on thinning of red and white pine unit. Area was planted with pine in 1941 and has been thinned in the past. This is the fourth thinning. Blowdown occurred in this unit between the sale and the harvest. Logger was able to harvest the low-quality blowdown timber but had to pulp it. The other unit has not been harvested yet and is an overstory removal of Jack Pine/Black Oak unit that has been growing since 1949. No prior harvest activity in that unit area.
Tomah Office	Review of WisFIRs
Team C – Beth Jacqmain,	
BUCKHORN WILDLIFE AREA Tract 14-15,	Oak-pine barrens 1 st harvest of a seed-tree cut in 2016 for regeneration. Abundant natural, advanced white oak species sprouting in understory. Plans to prescribed burn in 6-7 years to eliminated unwanted ground flora. Objectives include Production of habitat for Karner Blue Butterfly and other oak-pine barren dependent species.
BUCKHORN WILDLIFE AREA Stage 2 Oak-Pine Barrens restoration	Oak-pine barrens, harvest, fee-con. Older oak-pine barrens harvest done 2013. Fee-con brush/debris crusher used to clear site with plans to prescribed burn. Oak regeneration abundant.
BUCKHORN WILDLIFE AREA Existing Oak-Pine Barren Maintenance	Existing oak-pine barrens being maintained with periodic harvest and prescribed burning on 6-8-year intervals. Advanced regeneration present.
BUCKHORN STATE PARK Tract 11-14	Jack Pine harvest to regenerate, set up and not yet sold. No issues.
BUCKHORN STATE PARK Tract 12-14	Aspen overstory removal, harvest completed. No issues.
DELLS OF THE WI RIVER NATURAL AREA Tract 1-14	White Pine thinning and regeneration harvest, improve forest health, planned not yet sold. Timber sale adjacent to paved town road and gated gravel access road, some visual considerations for highway. Winter only harvest to protect Blanchard’s Cricket Frog, Slender Glass Lizard. Treating Japanese knotweed.



Appendix 4
Meeting Attendance

NSF Audit Attendance Sheet

Company Name WIDNR State Lands
 Location Black River Falls Forestry Area
 Type of Audit SFI FM 2nd Surveillance
 Opening Meeting Date August 21, 2017 Closing Meeting Date August 25, 2017

NAME (Printed)	TITLE/POSITION	OPENING MEETING (Initials)	CLOSING MEETING (Initials)
Norbert Bostwick	SFI Lead Auditor	NB	NB
Heather Berklund	WI DNR - Deputy Admin. of Operations	HB	H13
Ruthann Schulte	FSC & SFI Auditor	IRMS	RMS
Beth Jacobson	FSC/SFI Auditor	BO	BT
Eric ZENZ	Black River Team Leader	EZ	EZ
Travis Vedegan	Black River Falls Area ^{Area}	TV	TV
Greg Mitchell	Black River Falls Area Leader	G.M.	GM
Teague Prichard	DNR State Forest	TBP	T/D
Non-NSF Trent Mark	DNR - Forestry		
" Aaron Bucholz	DNR - FWP	AB	AB
" Chris Semann	DNR Forestry		
" Megan Mickelson	DNR Forestry		
" Tom Duke	DNR Forestry	TD	
Mary Ann Buenzow	DNR Forestry	MB	MB
" Andrew Sorenson	DNR Forestry	AS	
" Sean Davison	DNR Forestry	SD	
Mark Heyde	Forest Cert Coord.	MaH	MH
Peter Bakken	DNR - Forestry	PNB	
Cliff Gilman	DNR - Forestry	CEG	
Brad Hutnik	DNR - Forestry	BMH	
Jennifer Boice	DNR - Forestry	JB	JTB
Joe Wyss	DNR - Forestry	JW	JW
fred Souba			FS
Craig Thompson			CT
Megan Mitchell			MM

