

NSF-ISR, LTD**Surveillance Audit Report
June 12, 2008**

A. Program Participant's Name: Wisconsin County Forest Program, FRS 1Y943

B. Operations within the scope of SFIS Surveillance Audit:

Sustainable forestry activities of participating counties within the Wisconsin County Forest System and land management operations in selected Wisconsin County Forests including 25 counties encompassing approximately 2,185,641 acres of publicly owned forests, including the following counties: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Eau Claire, Florence, Forest, Iron, Jackson, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Marinette, Oconto, Oneida, Polk, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, Vilas, Washburn, Wood.

C. NSF Audit Team:

Lead Auditor: Michael Ferrucci

Auditor: Dave Wager

D. Audit Dates: May 20-23, 2008

E. Scope:

No Change

Changed (see Section H, revised scope statement noted on FRS, adjusted acres)

F. Reference Documentation:

2005-2009 SFI Standard®, County Integrated Forest Plans (various)

G. Audit Results: Based on the results at this visit, the auditor concluded

Acceptable with no nonconformances; or

Acceptable with minor nonconformances that should be corrected before the next regularly scheduled surveillance visit;

Not acceptable with one or two major nonconformances - corrective action required;

Several major nonconformances - certification may be canceled unless immediate action is taken

H. Changes to Operations or to the SFI Standard

Are there any significant changes in operations, procedures, specifications, FRS, etc. from the previous visit? Yes No

I. Corrective Action Requests: (see Appendix III)

Correct Action Requests Issued this visit: None

- Corrective Action Plan is not required.
 Corrective Action Plan is required within sixty days of this visit (for Minor Nonconformances). CARs will be verified during the next Surveillance Audit.
 Corrective Action Plan is required within thirty days of this visit (for Major Nonconformances). All major nonconformance(s) must be closed by the auditor prior to the next scheduled surveillance audit by a special verification visit or by desk review, if possible. The auditor will make arrangements to verify the corrective action has been effectively implemented.

Corrective Action Plans should be mailed to:

Mike Ferrucci, SFI Lead Auditor,
26 Commerce Drive, North Branford, CT 06471

At the conclusion of this Surveillance Audit visit, the following number of CARs remain open:

MAJOR(S) : None MINOR(S): One

In addition, Four Opportunities for Improvement (OFIs) were identified.

Appendices:

- Appendix I: Surveillance Notification Letter and Audit Schedule
Appendix II: Attendees and Field Sites
Appendix III: Corrective Action Requests
Appendix IV: Summary Surveillance Audit Report
Appendix V: Audit Matrix

Appendix I



Surveillance Notification Letter and Audit Schedule



May 11, 2008

Jeff Barkley, County Forest Program Specialist
Bureau of Forest Management
WI Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921

Re: Confirmation of SFI and FSC Surveillance Audits, Wisconsin County Forest System

Dear Mr. Barkley:

We are scheduled to conduct the Annual Surveillance Audits of the Wisconsin County Forest System on May 20 to 23 (Auditors travel to Wisconsin Monday May 19; evening meeting requested) as follows:

County	Date	Times	Program/ Auditor
Langlade	Tuesday, May 20	8 am to 5 pm	SFI Only / M.F.
Lincoln	Tuesday, May 20	8 am to 5 pm	FSC & SFI / D.W.
Forest	Wednesday, May 21	8 am to Noon	FSC and SFI / M.F.
Vilas	Wednesday, May 21	Noon to 5 pm	SFI Only / M.F.
Florence	Wednesday, May 21	8 am to 2 or 3 pm	FSC and SFI / D.W. (join Ferrucci in Vilas late afternoon)
Iron	Thursday, May 22	8 am to 2 pm	FSC and SFI / D.W. & M.F.
Douglas	Friday, May 23	7 am to 1 pm	FSC and SFI / M.F.
Bayfield	Friday, May 23	7 am to 1 pm	FSC and SFI / D.W.
Exit Meeting	Friday, May 23	2 pm to 3:15 pm	FSC and SFI / D.W. & M.F.

- Ferrucci flight from Duluth airport 4:45 pm

This is a partial review of your SFI and FSC Programs to confirm that they continue to be in conformance with the requirements and that progress is being made in closing your CARs. The audit team will consist of Mike Ferrucci, NSF-ISR Lead Auditor and Dave Wager, SCS Lead auditor. During the audit we will focus on the following:

SFI Program:

- Review progress on achieving SFI objectives and performance measures and the results of the management review of your SFI Program;
- Review selected components of your SFI program including areas identified as opportunities for improvement (efforts to implement soil erosion controls on seasonal forest roads, to develop guidelines to sustain forest productivity as demands for forest biomass intensity, and to update and apply guidelines for stand level retention, particularly coarse woody debris ; and
- Evaluate the effectiveness of planned activities aimed at continual improvement of your SFI Program.

FSC Program:

- A focused assessment of the status of outstanding corrective action requests
- Assess selected county forests against a portion of the FSC Lake States Standard. Counties will be assessed against Criteria and Indicators of the standard where non-conformances were observed in the original assessment, as well as other Criteria and Indicators, as determined by the SCS auditor.
- Review of any changes within DNR or enrolled Counties (e.g., staffing, land acquisitions, planning documents) that are pertinent to the certification.

Logistics

- As during the certification audit we should plan to have lunch on site to expedite the visit.
- You have arranged motel reservations for both lead auditors, who will pay for their own rooms when they arrive (reservations are listed on page 5 following the detailed agenda).
- Mike will travel in your vehicle(s) during the audit, but Dave Wager has a vehicle that he must keep with him; Dave can provide Mike transportation to and from the airports.
- We ask that you provide hardhats.

Field Site Selections

Working from the list of sales that were established, sold, or closed during the past two years, we have selected an initial subset of about 8 to 12 sales per county and will ask for additional information on these sales, including their accessibility during May, the likelihood of being actively harvested during the visit, and their locations on county maps. Once we receive this information we will select a number of sites from each county that we hope to visit. For most counties that number will be 6 to 9 harvest sites. On the day of the audit we would ask you to tell us about any sales that are being worked at that time, and we would add one or two of these if possible.

Documentation Requested

When we arrive each day please provide documentation for the selected sites similar to that provided for the certification audit (maps, project descriptions, and contracts). We would also need copies of the relevant portions of the management plans (a printed copy borrowed for the day will suffice) and any other information that would help us determine conformance to the certification requirements.

The enclosed tentative schedule should be reviewed by all participants. This schedule can be adapted either in advance or on-site to accommodate any special circumstances. If you have any questions regarding this planned audit, please contact either of us.

Sincerely yours,

Mike Ferrucci
SFI Program Manager, NSF-ISR
26 Commerce Drive
North Branford, CT 06471
mferrucci@iforest.com
Office and Mobile: 203-887-9248

Dave Wager
Director -Forest Management Certification SCS
6107 Skyview Drive
Missoula, Montana 59803
dwager@scscertified.com
Phone: 406-251-7049 Cell: 510-708-0397

Enclosure: Draft Agenda for Surveillance Audit; Contact Information for Counties

Iron County Thursday, May 22 8 am to 5 pm FSC and SFI*Time Activity*

7:45 am Arrive County Forestry Offices

8:00 am Opening Meeting and Office Discussions

Overview of Iron County Forest Management Program

Discussion of process for reviewing hardwood sales

10 am Review Selected Sales and Finalize Field Visit

10:15 – 2 pm Field Site Visits

2 pm Daily Briefing (field)

Contacts: Joe Vairus (CF Adm.) 715-561-2697 icfadmin@ironcountyforest.org and Darryl Fenner (Acting Liaison)715-476-3890 darryl.fenner@wisconsin.govDouglas County Friday, May 23 7 am to 1 pm FSC and SFI*Time Activity*

7:00 am Arrive County Forestry Offices

7:15 am Opening Meeting and Office Discussions

Overview of County Forest Management Program

8:15 am Review Selected Sales and Finalize Field Visit

8:30 – 1 pm Field Site Visits

1-1:30 pm Travel to location for exit briefing (Douglas County preferred)

Contacts: Jon Harris (CF adm.) 715-378-2219 jharris@douglascountywi.org and Don Luebbe (Liaison) 715-376-2299 donald.luebbe@wisconsin.govBayfield County Friday, May 23 7 am to 1 pm FSC and SFI*Time Activity*

7:00 am Arrive County Forestry Offices

7:15 am Opening Meeting and Office Discussions

Overview of Bayfield County Forest Management Program

8:15 am Review Selected Sales and Finalize Field Visit

8:30 – 1 pm Field Site Visits

1-1:30 pm Travel to location for exit briefing (Douglas County preferred)

Contacts: Paul Lundberg (CF Adm) or Steve Probst (Asst. CF Adm.) 715-373-6114 forestry@bayfieldcounty.organd Tim Davis 7150373-6165 tim.davis@wisconsin.govLocation TBD Friday, May 23 1:30 to 3:15 pm Closing Meetings for FSC and SFI

1:30 – 2 pm Auditors Confer

2 pm – 3:15 Closing Meeting - Discussion of results and findings

SFI Closing Meeting

FSC Closing Meeting

3:15 pm Auditors leave for Duluth airport (4:45 flight)

Lodging**Tomahawk** Rodeway Inn & Suites (formerly Comfort Inn) - (May 19 & 20) - (715) 453-8900

1738 Comfort Drive, Tomahawk, WI

Park Falls Northway Motor Lodge (May 21) - (715) 762-2406

1113 4th Ave S, Park Falls, WI

Ashland AmericInn (May 22) - (715) 682-9950

3009 N Lakeshore Drive East, Ashland, WI

Appendix II



Attendees and Field Sites

Langlade County Tuesday, May 20 SFI

Participants:

Mike Ferrucci, Lead Auditor
 Jeff Barkley, Wisconsin DNR County Forest Specialist
 Quinn Williams, WDNR Forestry Attorney
 John Gritt, DNR Assistant County Forester, Wisconsin DNR
 Tom Duke, Staff Supervisor, Wisconsin DNR
 Mike Lietz, Forestry Supervisor Langlade & Lincoln County, Wisconsin DNR
 Ted Avelallemant, DNR Liaison
 Eric Borchert, Wildlife Technician, Wisconsin DNR
 Jane Severt, Executive Director, Wisconsin County Forests Association
 Steve Jackson, Forest Administrator, Langlade County
 Eric Rantala, Assistant Forest Administrator, Langlade County
 Nathan Gilbert, Forester, Langlade County
 Dale Carlson, Forester, Langlade County

Langlade County Forest Sites Visited:

1. Sale 911-06 Completed Aspen clearcut and NH selection harvest
2. Sale 938-06 Completed Red Pine thinning
3. Jack Lake Fire Lane – improved road
4. Vernal pool alongside of Jack Lake Fire Lane
5. Birch strip regeneration harvest (roadside)
6. Pence lake Wayside (drove by)
7. Sale 892-06 Completed aspen clearcut
8. Sale 930-06 Active harvest, logger not present, Selection harvest of northern hardwoods
9. Sale 946.07 Completed Selection harvest of northern hardwoods
10. Augustyn Springs ATV trail
11. Roadside (unscheduled) review of completed selection harvest of northern hardwoods

Florence County Thursday, May 21 FSC and SFI

Participants:

Dave Wager SCS, FSC Lead Auditor, SFI Auditor
 Pat Smith County Forest Administrator
 Jeremy Holtz DNR Wildlife Biologist
 Stuart Boren DNR Liaison Forester
 Jeff Barkley DNR County Forest Specialist
 Tom Duke Regional Staff Supervisor, DNR Antigo

Florence County Forest, Field Sites Visited:

1. Contract 692, Block 2: 33-acre Jack pine/aspen clearcut; goal to regenerate aspen, some scrub oak retained, minimal green tree retention; RMZ set well below required 50ft on Pine Creek at one point;
2. Cultural site of 1930's era barn identified and vegetation retained around it
3. Tract 13-96- Firebreak Pine planting: red pine planting at 700-800 trees per acre; helicopter herbicide of competing vegetation with glyphosate using sustainable forestry grant.

4. Track 13-96: Successful natural regeneration of Jack pine, which is now preferred regeneration method for Jack pine.
5. Contract 691- Right of Way Sale along Bass Lake Fire Lane Road: Worked with town to widen right of way through timber harvest.
6. South Brush Lake Oak Sale – Block 1- Red oak and scrub oak regeneration cut; adequate green tree retention of pine and higher quality oak; aesthetic buffer along County C.
7. South Brush Lake Oak Sale- Block 2- Scrub oak with 80% mortality from gypsy moth, drought, forest tent caterpillar. Only retention was a couple pines, none of the live oak were retained. RMZ put in on Lake.
8. County maintained park- W Bass Lake Park: 20 campsites, beach, picnic area.
9. Contract 695, Block 4- aspen regeneration cut; logger had found 2 hawk nests (unsure of species- though) after starting logging; NHI had red shouldered hawk occurrence in this quarter section; Block 2 managed for oak with cut of aspen and mixed hardwood;
10. Contract 694 Welfare Sale: Northern hardwood thinning, BA from ~120 to 80; only one gap observed; good species selection;
11. Washburn Falls on Popple River; RMZ buffer exceed requirements on non-navigable tributary

Forest County Wednesday, May 21 FSC and SFI

Participants:

Mike Ferrucci, Lead Auditor, NSF-ISR
 Paul Pingrey, Forest Certification Coordinator, WDNR
 Michael Luedeke, WDNR Regional Forestry Leader
 Phil Theiler, WDNR Area Forestry Supervisor
 Brian Spencer, WDNR Areas Staff Specialist
 Quinn Williams, WDNR Forestry Attorney
 John Gritt, DNR Assistant County Forester, Wisconsin DNR
 Craig Williams, Wisconsin DNR Liaison Forester
 Dan Peters, Forest County Natural Resources Technician

Forest County Forest, Field Sites Visited:

1. Goblin Sale 438-07
2. Railroad Sale 435-06
3. Dump Sale 3-06

Vilas County Wednesday, May 21 SFI

Participants:

Mike Ferrucci, Lead Auditor, NSF-ISR
 Paul Pingrey, Forest Certification Coordinator, WDNR
 Michael Luedeke, WDNR Regional Forestry Leader
 Phil Theiler, WDNR Area Forestry Supervisor
 Tim Friedrich, WDNR Forestry Team Leader
 Brian Spencer, WDNR Area Staff Specialist
 Jim Baughman, WDNR Liaison Forester
 Quinn Williams, WDNR Forestry Attorney
 John Gritt, DNR Assistant County Forester, Wisconsin DNR
 Larry Stevens, Vilas County Forest Administrator
 John Gagnon, Asst.Vilas County Forest Administrator
 Steve Favorite, Vilas County Board Chair
 Bob Egan, Vilas County Board
 Leon Kukanich, Vilas County Board

Vilas County Forest, Sites Visited:

1. Sale 03-06
2. Cook's Lake Handicapped Access
3. Hunter Lake Park – Picnic Area, Beach, Boat Launch
4. Sale #803 Roadside strip of WHP/REP over cut aspen
5. Sale #828

6. JP Site Preparation and Planting
7. JP Pre-commercial thinning in 2000
8. RP and JP Pre-commercial thinning
9. Sale #813 (drive by only) Strip Cuts
10. Spruce Strip Cut (drive by) successful regeneration of Tamarack and Black Spruce

Iron County Thursday, May 22 FSC and SFI

Participants:

Mike Ferrucci, Lead Auditor, NSF-ISR
 Dave Wager, FSC Lead Auditor, SCS
 Jeff Barkley, Wisconsin DNR County Forest Specialist
 Paul Pingrey, Forest Certification Coordinator, WDNR
 Michael Luedeke, WDNR Regional Forestry Leader
 Tom Duke, Staff Supervisor, Wisconsin DNR
 Darryl Fenner, Acting DNR Liaison, DNR
 Neal Martinko, Iron County Forester
 C.E. Zinsmaster, Iron County Forester
 Gary Glonek, Iron County Forester
 Jane Severt, Executive Director, Wisconsin County Forest Association
 Joe Schmidt, Forester – Mercer, Wisconsin DNR
 Chris Niehaus, Forester – Mercer, Wisconsin DNR
 Tara Stuhr, Office Manager / Trail Coordinator – Iron County Forest
 Tom Thompson, Iron County Forestry Committee Chair
 Angelo Aimone, Iron County Forestry Scaler
 Gary Kangas, Logger Iron County
 Tim Lee, North County Lumber

Iron County Forest, Field Sites Visited:

1. Sale 2279 Northern hardwood sale completed – rutting and undesignated trees cut
2. Sale 2275 Northern hardwood sale marked, did not pass review initially, remarked

Lincoln County Tuesday, May 20, 2008 FSC and SFI

Participants:

Dave Wager SCS, FSC Lead Auditor, SFI Auditor
 Paul Pingrey DNR Forest Certification Coordinator
 Kevin Kleinschmidt Lincoln County Forest Administrator
 Bill Groth DNR Liaison
 Rick Weide DNR Wildlife Biologist
 Brian Spencer DNR Forestry Staff Specialist
 Jerrard Macholl Lincoln County Forester
 Mike Luedeke WDNR Regional Forestry Leader
 Lee Rahlf Lincoln County, Forester
 Dean Bowe Assistant County Forest Administrator

Lincoln County Forest, Field Sites Visited:

1. Tract 16-07: ATV trail with rolling dips for good drainage; spur road/skid trail stemming off trail had effective berm to prevent access.
2. Tract #16-07: completed 50-acre NH thinning with gaps (30 to 60 foot radius) to regenerate intolerant oak and other. Smola Brothers contracting; logs decked roadside with town permission meant no landing; ATM habitat Hummock terrain with many kettles. Minor amounts of rutting- not exceeding contract standards.
3. T-17-07- Beaver Trail road: Active sale with handfeller/skidder; NH thinning (with small gaps); Schenzel Logging- (interview); lake shore management zone on steep slope had limited single tree selection with old forest/long lived species objective; equipment exclusion zone marked and followed;
4. T-03-07: completed, 37-acre NH thinning with gaps; small aspen regeneration patch; Samosa Logging
5. Tamarack strip cut on Parish Road- excellent regeneration: cut in 3 units with 20 years between each cut;

6. T-03-06: completed, 52-acre aspen regeneration cut; age 39, delimbed in forest, good fine biomass, no large woody debris;
7. T-29-07: aspen regeneration cut, age-37 (cutting some stands early to balance age class distribution); standard marginal retention of oak, spruce, hemlock; no retention patches; whole tree chip (some delimiting in stand), fair amount of fine biomass, but very little coarse woody debris.
8. Near T-29-07: new road construction, culvert installed on wetland crossing.
9. T-38-06: 15-acre Jack pine clearcut; age 74; no retention, biomass harvest used to accomplish site prep.
10. T-38-06: Pronone granular applied to aspen to release red pine;
11. T-38-06: Red pine planting 1,000 trees per acre; good survival; v-trench technique used
12. T-38-06: 3rd thinning of red pine plantation

Bayfield County Friday, May 21 FSC and SFI

Participants:

Dave Wager SCS, FSC Lead Auditor, SFI Auditor
 Jeff Barkley DNR County Forest Specialist
 Steve Probst Assistant Forest Administrator
 Todd Naas DNR Wildlife Biologist
 Tim Davis DNR Liaison Forester
 Kirby Dernovsek Bayfield County Forester
 Mike Amman Bayfield County Forester
 Jason Bodine Bayfield County Forester
 Tom Duke Regional Staff Supervisor

Bayfield County Forest, Field Sites

1. Contract 2863, Tract 54-05: 34-acre aspen (with minor oak, birch component) regeneration cut. Pine and red maple maintained; B&B logging- interviewed logger.
2. Junction County A/Halfway Rd; Floating Pine barrens; area ¼ mile x 5 miles managed to promote shifting mosaic of early successional habitat to benefit sharp tailed grouse and other early successional spp. and to maintain rare pine barrens community type; goal to maintain approx 2000 acres of early successional habitat at any given time, minimize edge, and create large blocks to mimic natural disturbance patterns.
3. Contract 2886, Tract 15-06: 67-acre red pine thinning, 3rd entry.
4. Near contract 2886, red pine planting A: planted spring 2007 after trenching site preparation; red pine planting B: planted 2004 and released 2006 with Accord;
5. Contract 2953, Tract 21-07: 63-acre northern hardwood thinning w/ regeneration gaps; not yet cut, canopy gaps systematically placed (40 ft radius gap every 2 chains) throughout sale with prescribed 40% scarification of gap; gaps cover 9% of sale;
6. Tract 60-05: 47-acre oak shelterwood, cut 2006 retained 50 sq ft of basal area in oak with scattered white birch; fenced 29 acres of sale, scarified and planted limited amounts of white pine and cedar; dramatic difference between regeneration inside of fence relative to outside, numerous sprouting acorns, stump sprouts, and white birch present inside, and very little observed outside of fence. Permanent plots will be established inside and outside of sale to assess all flora. Made compelling case that forest with ~35 deer per sq mile (which is over 92% above goal for mgt. unit 2) is severely impacted (see Recommendation 2008.2)
7. 2880; 84-acre mixed hardwood sale with tamarack/black spruce cuts; could only access edge of sale

Douglas County Friday, May 21 FSC and SFI

Participants:

Mike Ferrucci, Lead Auditor, NSF-ISR
 Paul Pingrey, Forest Certification Coordinator, WDNR
 Michael Luedeke, WDNR Regional Forestry Leader
 Rod Fouks, DNR Team Leader
 Rick Matlack, DNR Forester
 Don Luebbe, DNR Liaison Forester
 Greg Kessler, DNR Wildlife Biologist

Jon Harris, Douglas County Forest Director
Craig Golembiewski, Douglas County Forester
Jason Langenecker, Inventory Forester / GIS Specialist, Douglas County Forest
Jim Latvala, Douglas County Forester
Mark Hager, Douglas County Forester
David Cizmas, Douglas County Forester
Mark Schroeder, Resource and Recreation Manager, Douglas County Forest

Douglas County, Field Sites Visited:

1. Sale # 3745 Partially completed, includes selection harvest northern hardwoods and seed-tree harvest for white birch;
 - 1a. Older sale near Sale #3745 Completed shelterwood for oak regeneration, burned several times
2. Belden Swamp SNA – very large black spruce swamp protected (drove by)
3. Spruce River Block Grouse Management Area (drove by)
4. Town Line Road – several large clearcuts to salvage Jack Pine killed by JP Budworm – mechanical site preparation – planting – protection from deer browse by means of bud capping – large block Jack Pine management supporting open lands mgmt (see Site #16 below)
5. Darwin’s Loop - Douglas County forest road
6. ATV trail and winter snowmobile trail (seen at multiple locations, drove short sections)
7. Sale # 3785 Active jack pine salvage harvest nearly complete – drum chipper operating on yarded material
8. Strutter’s Lane – new (relocated) road adjacent to Sale 3785 – crowned and ditched per BMPs
1. 9. Walker Homestead Quarter Section – interpretive sign and older sale to promote natural Jack Pine mixed w. Oak (drove by)
9. Completed Jack Pine harvest with site preparation by blade scarification in rows previously thinned
10. Sale #3770 Jack Pine salvage area blade scarified for natural regeneration – left standing Jack Pine snags, not planting
11. Completed Jack Pine harvest with site preparation by tractor furrows for later planting – done as part of training exercise for WDNR – excellent example of benefits of the state-county partnership
12. Chief Kabemabe Village historic site sign (village site flooded by flowage dam)
13. Gordon Flowage County Park – campground, boat ramp w. Parking, large flowage behind dam maintained by DCF
14. Sale # 3753 Jack Pine salvage
15. Douglas County State Wildlife Area – 2,500 acres of county forests leased to state and managed with other state lands to comprise a large area for barrens management; also field trials area for hunting dogs – close co-operation with the “Friends of the Bird Sanctuary”
16. Sale 3755 Jack Pine and Aspen harvest near roads and trail – aesthetic provisions

Appendix III



Corrective Action Requests

Corrective and Preventive Action Request (CAR)

Company/Location: <u>Wisconsin County Forest System</u>	Date: <u>May 22, 2008</u> FRS # <u>1Y943</u>
Auditor: <u>Michael Ferrucci</u>	CAR Number: <u>SFI-2008-1</u>
Location of Finding: <u>Field</u>	Previous CAR Number/Date: <u>none</u>
Discussed with: <u>Jeff Barkley, County Forestry Specialist</u>	Nonconformance Type (underline): Major <u>Minor</u>

AUDITOR FINDING: Standard Number and Clause: SFI Indicator 4.1.4: Development and implementation of criteria, as guided by regionally appropriate science, for retention of stand-level wildlife habitat elements (e.g. snags, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees, nest trees).

Description: The Wisconsin County Forest Program has not developed and implemented criteria for stand level habitat retention elements* consistent with stated goals for maintenance of biodiversity. *(for example live trees reserved from harvest, snags, den trees, nest trees, structural features such as conifer inclusions in hardwood stands).

IF NECESSARY, PLEASE ATTACH A SEPARATE REPORT ADDRESSING THE FOLLOWING THREE ITEMS:

1) ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS BY COMPANY–Include potential causes & assurance problem does not exist in other areas.

Retention of trees for wildlife considerations (specifically mast, nest, and den trees) has been an inclusion in the Silvicultural and Aesthetics Handbook (HB2431.5 – pages 24-5 and 24-6 Marking Guidelines) for several years. The guidance has been subject to varied interpretation and used as a general rule of thumb rather than a guideline. In addition, several chapters on forest types include a section on “Wildlife attributes” for that type and go into detail on considerations to be applied when managing that forest type. Field staff have a general awareness of the importance of tree retention particularly as it relates to wildlife however, communication and implementation of specific criteria has been lacking.

2) CORRECTIVE ACTION BY COMPANY – Based on the Root Cause Analysis, the following action has been planned/taken to correct the problem. Please include expected completion date.

The statewide Silviculture Committee is currently in the process reviewing and updating guidelines relating to stand-level wildlife habitat elements. These will be included into a revised chapter on “Marking Guidelines” in the handbook. Two revisions have been completed with a goal of completing the final draft revision in the summer of 2008. The guidelines will be distributed to groups for comments / revisions at that time with a final product available by the end of 2008. There is some crossover with the efforts underway to develop woody biomass harvest guidelines. Consequently this effort closely mirrors the progress and timeline on that initiative. DNR Silviculturalist Joe Kovach made a presentation to the Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) at their Spring Administrator’s Conference.

Training on the new criteria and the woody biomass guidelines will follow in 2009 and 2010. Monitoring of implementation will be a consideration on the timber sale narratives (2460-1a).

3) PREVENTIVE ACTION BY COMPANY – Based on the Root Cause Analysis, the following action has been planned/taken to correct the problem. Please include expected completion date.

WDNR will include an assessment of the training, understanding, and implementation as part of the internal SFI monitoring that is built into the regular County Forest audits (3 yr. intervals) as well as the annual County Forest / DNR partnership meetings. This will be implemented effective in fiscal year 2009 (which begins 7/1/08).

AUDITOR REVIEW OF COMPANY’S PLAN:

The plan includes a thorough explanation of past, current, and projected efforts to develop and implement stand level wildlife retention. Implementation will be reviewed during the next audit.

STATUS: Open AUDITOR/DATE: Mike Ferrucci / June 12, 2008

AUDITOR REVIEW OF COMPANY’S COMPLETED ACTION:

STATUS: _____ AUDITOR/DATE: _____

LEGEND: OPEN=CA Plan Accepted **CLOSED**=CA implemented, verified & accepted **REJECTED**=CA Plan or Implementation rejected

Appendix IV**SFI Surveillance Audit Report**

The SFI Program of the Wisconsin County Forest Program has demonstrated continuing conformance with the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard ®, 2005-2009 Edition (SFIS), according to the NSF-ISR SFIS Certification Audit Process.

NSF-ISR initially certified Wisconsin County Forest Program to the SFIS on December 10, 2004 and used the “continuous surveillance option” to update the certificate to the 2005-2009 Edition in February, 2006. This report describes the second follow-up Surveillance Audit designed to focus on changes in the standard, changes in operations, the management review system, and efforts at continuous improvement. In addition, a subset of SFI requirements were selected for detailed review.

Wisconsin County Forest Program includes 2.3 million acres of forestland managed by 29 counties in the central and northern portions of Wisconsin. The scope of the SFIS Certification encompasses sustainable forestry activities of participating counties within the Wisconsin County Forest System and land management operations in selected Wisconsin County Forests including 25 counties encompassing approximately 2,185,641 acres of publicly owned forests, including the following counties:

Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Eau Claire , Florence , Forest , Iron, Jackson , Juneau , Langlade, Lincoln , Marathon , Marinette, Oconto, Oneida, Polk, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, Vilas, Washburn, Wood

Responsibility for management of these forests rests with elected county boards, with management activities implemented by county-employed foresters supported by DNR personnel. The forests are managed to provide revenue, habitat, recreational opportunities, and to protect biodiversity values and special sites. The lands abound with a variety of game and non-game wildlife species, and attract a variety of recreationists from hunters to trail users to nature enthusiasts. The most common tree species in order are aspen, sugar maple, red maple, red oak, red pine, basswood, and white birch. Harvest levels over the past decade have averaged over 12 million board feet and 660,000 cords.

The Wisconsin County Forest’s SFI Program is managed by Jeffrey Barkley, County Forests Specialist. A County Forest Certification Committee comprised of representatives of the counties, the Wisconsin County Forest Association, and DNR staff help implement the SFI program, reviewing progress and making suggestions for improvements or changes as needed.

The surveillance audit was performed by NSF-ISR on May 20-23, 2008 by an audit team including Lead Auditor Mike Ferrucci and Audit Team Member Dave Wager, Forest Ecologist. Auditors fulfill the qualification criteria for conducting SFIS Certification Audits contained in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Audit Procedures and Qualifications (SFI APQ). The objective of the audit was to assess continuing conformance of the organization’s SFI Program to the requirements of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Standard, 2005-2009 Edition. Forest

practices that were the focus of field inspections included those that have been conducted since January 1, 2006. In addition, a subset of SFI obligations to promote sustainable forestry practices, to practice sustainable forestry while protecting soil and water resources, and to incorporate continual improvement systems were reexamined during the audit.

The requirements of the 2005-2009 Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard were used in the audit; no indicators were modified. As with the initial certification the scope included timberland only, as the Wisconsin County Forest Program's SFI programs do not include procurement operations. Several of the SFI Performance Measures were outside of the scope of the county programs and were excluded from the scope of the SFI Certification Audit as follows:

- Indicator 2.1.3 Plantings of exotic tree species
- Indicator 3.2.5 Riparian experts consulted where guidelines do not exist
- Objective 8 – Procurement Requirements

SFIS Surveillance Audit Process

The review was governed by a detailed audit protocol 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 were provided to the auditor in advance, and a sample of the available audit evidence was designated by the auditor for review.

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. Surveillance Audits generally focus on conformance issues and do not generally address exceptional practices.

Overview of Audit Findings

Wisconsin County Forest Program's SFI Program was found to be in substantial conformance with the SFIS Standard. There was one new non-conformances identified involving the development and implementation of stand level habitat retention elements, such as live trees reserved from harvest, snags, den trees, nest trees, or structural features such as conifer inclusions in hardwood stands.

The NSF-ISR Audit team reviewed issues relating to past closed minor non-conformance and found that the Wisconsin County Forest Program continues to implement appropriate corrective action plans in that all counties require that logging crews working on these forests (at least one logger present at all times) have received appropriate FISTA training offered through the Forest Industry & Safety Training Alliance (FISTA).

Four opportunities for improvement were also identified. These findings do not indicate a current deficiency, but served to alert Wisconsin County Forest Program to areas that could be strengthened or which could merit future attention. These include the following:

There is an opportunity to improve the implementation of road drainage BMPs.

There is an opportunity to improve the guidelines for retention of coarse woody debris and for establishing limits to removal of wood fiber so as to maintain soil productivity, consistent with existing scientific knowledge.

There is an opportunity to improve training for awareness of, and ability to identify new sites for, rare, threatened, or uncommon species and/or uncommon or exemplary natural community types.

There is an opportunity to improve training on the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan and the use of this report and other tools to protect and maintain biodiversity.

Wisconsin County Forest Program was found to exceed the 2005-2009 Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard® as follows:

- Indicator 2.4.2: “Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to minimize susceptibility to damaging agents.” Management efforts and results in terms of forest health are exceptional.
- Indicator 4.1.3: “Plans to locate and protect known sites associated with viable occurrences of critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities. 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.” Management goes further than this requirement, with assessments conducted to find new sites, and to locate and protect features which are locally rare (the requirement is to protect globally rare features).
- Indicator 4.1.5: “Assessment, conducted individually or collaboratively, of forest cover types and habitats at the individual ownership level and, where credible data are available, across the landscape, and incorporation of findings into planning and management activities, where practical and when consistent with management objectives.” The role of the county forests in providing for the maintenance of declining but important forest types such as Aspen or Birch forests constitutes an exceptional practice.
- Indicator 12.2.3: “Recreation opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.” The Wisconsin County Forests provide an exemplary array of recreation opportunities; forest management is implemented so as to enhance these.
- Performance Measure 12.1: “Involvement in public land planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public.” The county forests provide a model for citizen participation, with leadership from each county forest committee.

Further, the organization has improved its SFI program by revising all of the County Forest Management Plans and by increasing the efforts to train all involved staff in the certification requirements and in areas identified in certification audits as needing additional attention.

The next surveillance audit is scheduled for late summer or fall, 2009.

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Appendix V



Audit Matrix

NSF-ISR auditors use this document to record their findings for each SFIS Performance Measure and Indicator. If a non-conformance is found the auditor shall fully document the reasons on the Corrective Action Request (CAR) form. The first portion of the matrix provides an overall record of audit findings over time. This ensures that all requirements are audited within the five-year life of the certificate. The “Audit Notes” portion provides the detailed findings.

Surveillance audits involve a partial review, so not all requirements are audited each visit.]

- NA in the Auditor column indicates that the associated Performance Measure or Indicator does not apply; otherwise the Auditor column is optional.
- Findings codes: C=Conformance; EXR=Exceeds the SFI requirement; Maj= Major Non-conformance; Min=Minor Non-conformance; OFI= Opportunity for Improvement (OFI may be combined with other findings)
- Findings are indicated by a date or date code: Audit Date: June 2007; Date Code: 7; May 2008 Code 8

Objective 1: To broaden the implementation of sustainable forestry by ensuring long-term harvest levels based on the use of the best scientific information available.

Performance Measure/ Indicator	Audit- or	--- Indicate Only One ---				OFI
		<u>C</u>	<u>EXR</u>	<u>Maj</u>	<u>Min</u>	
1.1 <i>Program Participants shall ensure that long-term harvest levels are sustainable and consistent with appropriate growth and-yield models and written plans.</i>		7, 8				
1.1.1 A long-term resource analysis to guide forest management planning at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the operation, including: a. a periodic or ongoing forest inventory; b. a land classification system; c. soils inventory and maps, where available; d. access to growth-and-yield modeling capabilities; e. up-to-date maps or a geographic information system (GIS); f. recommended sustainable harvest levels; and g. a review of nontimber issues (e.g., pilot projects and economic incentive programs to promote water protection, carbon storage, or biological diversity conservation).		7, 8				
1.1.2 Documentation of annual harvest trends in relation to the sustainable forest management plan.		7, 8				
1.1.3 A forest inventory system and a method to calculate growth.		7, 8				
1.1.4 Periodic updates of inventory and recalculation of planned harvests.		7, 8				
1.1.5 Documentation of forest practices (e.g., planting, fertilization, and thinning) consistent with assumptions in harvest plans.		7, 8				

Objective 2: To ensure long-term forest productivity and conservation of forest resources through prompt reforestation, soil conservation, afforestation and other measures.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or-	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
2.1	<i>Program Participants shall reforest after final harvest, unless delayed for site-specific environmental or forest health considerations, through artificial regeneration within two years or two planting seasons, or by planned natural regeneration methods within five years.</i>		7, 8				
2.1.1	Designation of all management units for either natural or artificial regeneration.		7, 8				
2.1.2	Clear Requirements to judge adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct under-stocked areas and achieve desired species composition and stocking rates for both artificial and natural regeneration			8			
2.1.3	Minimized plantings of exotic tree species and research documentation that exotic tree species, planted operationally, pose minimal risk.		7, 8				
2.1.4	Protection of desirable or planned advanced natural regeneration during harvest.		7, 8				
2.1.5	Artificial reforestation programs that consider potential ecological impacts of a different species or species mix from that which was harvested.		7, 8				
2.2	<i>Program Participants shall minimize chemical use required to achieve management objectives while protecting employees, neighbors, the public and the forest environment.</i>						
2.2.1	Minimized chemical use required to achieve management objectives.		7, 8				
2.2.2	Use of least toxic and narrowest spectrum pesticide narrowest spectrum and least toxic pesticides necessary to achieve management objective.		7				
2.2.3	Use of pesticides registered for the intended use and applied in accordance with the label requirements.		8				
2.2.4	Use of Integrated Pest Management where feasible.		7, 8				
2.2.5	Supervision of forest chemical applications by state-trained or certified applicators.		7				
2.2.6	Use of best management practices appropriate to the situation; for example: adjoining landowners or nearby residents notified of applications and chemicals used; appropriate multi-lingual signs or oral warnings used; public road access controlled during and after applications; streamside and other needed buffer strips appropriately designated; positive shut-off and minimal drift spray valves used; drift minimized by aerially applying forest chemicals parallel to buffer zones; water quality monitored or other methods used to assure proper ...						

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
2.2.6	...equipment use and stream protection of streams, lakes and other waterbodies; chemicals stored at appropriate locations; state reports filed as required; or methods used to ensure protection of federally listed threatened & endangered species						
2.3	<i>Program Participants shall implement management practices to protect and maintain forest and soil productivity.</i>		7, 8				
2.3.1	Use of soils maps where available.		7, 8				
2.3.2	Process to identify soils vulnerable to compaction and use of appropriate methods to avoid excessive soil disturbance.		7, 8				
2.3.3	Use of erosion control measures to minimize the loss of soil and site productivity.		7, 8				7, 8
2.3.4	Post-harvest conditions conducive to maintaining site productivity (e.g., limited rutting, retained down woody debris, minimized skid trails).		7, 8				7, 8
2.3.5	Retention of vigorous trees during partial harvesting, consistent with silvicultural norms for the area.		7, 8				
2.3.6	Criteria that address harvesting and site preparation to protect soil productivity.		7, 8				
2.3.7	Minimized road construction to meet management objectives efficiently.		7, 8				
2.4	<i>Program Participants shall manage so as to protect forests from damaging agents such as environmentally or economically undesirable wildfire, pests and diseases to maintain and improve long-term forest health, productivity and economic viability.</i>		7, 8				
2.4.1	Program to protect forests from damaging agents.		7, 8				
2.4.2	Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to minimize susceptibility to damaging agents.		7	8			
2.4.3	Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control programs.		7, 8				
2.5	<i>Program Participants that utilize genetically improved planting stock including those derived through biotechnology shall use sound scientific methods and follow all applicable laws and other internationally applicable protocols.</i>		7				
2.5.1	Program for appropriate research, testing, evaluation and deployment of genetically improved planting stock including trees derived through biotechnology.		7				

Objective 3: To protect water quality in streams, lakes and other water bodies.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
3.1	<i>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 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved state water quality programs other applicable federal, provincial, state or local programs.</i>		7				
3.1.1	Program to implement state or provincial equivalent BMPs during all phases of management activities.		7, 8				8
3.1.2	Contract provisions that specify BMP compliance.		7				
3.1.3	Plans that address wet weather events (e.g., inventory systems, wet weather tracts, defining acceptable operational conditions, etc.).		7				
3.1.4	Monitoring of overall BMP implementation.		7, 8				
3.2	<i>Program Participant shall have or develop, implement, and document, riparian protection measures based on soil type, terrain, vegetation and other applicable factors.</i>		7				
3.2.1	Program addressing management and protection of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones.		7				
3.2.2	Mapping of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones, and where appropriate, identification on the ground.		7				
3.2.3	Implementation of plans to manage or protect streams, lakes and other water bodies.		7, 8				
3.2.4	Identification and protection of nonforested wetlands, including bogs, fens, vernal pools and marshes of significant size.		7				
3.2.5	Where regulations or BMPs do not currently exist to protect riparian areas, use of experts to identify appropriate protection measures.		N.A.				

Objective 4: 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 habitat diversity and the conservation of forest plants and animals including aquatic fauna.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or-	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
4.1	<i>Program participants shall have programs to promote biological diversity at stand- and landscape- scales.</i>		7, 8				8 (2)
4.1.1	Program to promote the conservation of native biological diversity, including species, wildlife habitats, and ecological or natural community types, at stand and landscape levels.		7, 8				
4.1.2	Program to protect threatened and endangered species.		7, 8				
4.1.3	Plans to locate and protect known sites associated with viable occurrences of critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities. 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		8	7			
4.1.4	Development and implementation of criteria, as guided by regionally appropriate science, for retention of stand-level wildlife habitat elements (e.g., snags, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees, nest trees).		7			8	7
4.1.5	Assessment, conducted individually or collaboratively, of forest cover types and habitats at the individual ownership level and, where credible data are available, across the landscape, and incorporation of findings into planning and management activities, where practical and when consistent with management objectives.		7	8			
4.1.6	Support of and participation in plans or programs for the conservation of old-growth forests in the region of ownership.		7, 8				
4.1.7	Participation in programs and demonstration of activities as appropriate to limit the introduction, impact, and spread of invasive exotic plants and animals that directly threaten or are likely to threaten native plant and animal communities.		7				
4.1.8	Program to incorporate the role of prescribed or natural fire where appropriate.						
4.2	<i>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.</i>		8				
4.2.1	Collection of information on critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities 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 nonproprietary scientific information, time, and assistance by staff, or in-kind or direct financial support.		8				

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
4.2.2	A methodology to incorporate research results and field applications of biodiversity and ecosystem research into forest management decisions.		8				

Objective 5: To manage the visual impact of harvesting and other forest operations.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
5.1	<i>Program Participants shall manage the impact of harvesting on visual quality.</i>						
5.1.1	Program to address visual quality management.		7, 8				
5.1.2	Incorporation of aesthetic considerations in harvesting, road, landing design and management, and other management activities where visual impacts are a concern.		7, 8				
5.2	<i>Program Participants shall manage the size, shape, and placement of clearcut harvests.</i>		7				
5.2.1	Average size of clearcut harvest areas does not exceed 120 acres, except when necessary to respond to forest health emergencies or other natural catastrophes.		7, 8				
5.2.2	Documentation through internal records of clearcut size and the process for calculating average size.						
5.3	<i>Program Participants shall adopt a green-up requirement or alternative methods that provide for visual quality.</i>						
5.3.1	Program implementing the green-up requirement or alternative methods.						
5.3.2	Harvest area tracking system to demonstrate compliance with the green-up requirement or alternative methods.						
5.3.3	Trees in clearcut harvest areas are at least 3 years old or 5 feet 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.		7				

Objective 6: To manage Program Participant lands that are ecologically, geologically, historically, or culturally important in a manner that recognizes their special qualities.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
6.1.	<i>Program Participants shall identify special sites and manage them in a manner appropriate for their unique features.</i>		7, 8				
6.1.1	Use of existing natural heritage data and expert advice in identifying or selecting sites for protection because of their ecologically, geologically, historically, or culturally important qualities.		7, 8				
6.1.2	Appropriate mapping, cataloging, and management of identified special sites.		7, 8				

Objective 7: To promote the efficient use of forest resources.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
7.1	<i>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.</i>		7, 8				
7.1.1	Program or monitoring system to ensure efficient utilization, which may include provisions to ensure a. landings left clean with little waste; b. residues distributed to add organic and nutrient value to future forests; c. training or incentives to encourage loggers to enhance utilization; d. cooperation with mill managers for better utilization of species and low-grade material; e. merchandizing of harvested material to ensure use for its most beneficial purpose; f. development of markets for underutilized species and low-grade wood; g. periodic inspections and reports noting utilization and product separation; or h. exploration of alternative markets (e.g., energy markets).		7, 8				

N.A.: Objective 8: To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry through procurement programs.

Objective 9: To improve forestry research, science, and technology, upon which sound forest management decisions are based.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		<u>Audit</u> <u>-or</u>	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				<u>O</u> <u>F</u> <u>I</u>
			<u>C</u>	<u>EXR</u>	<u>Maj</u>	<u>Min</u>	
9.1	<i>Program Participants shall individually, through cooperative efforts, or through associations provide in-kind support or funding, in addition to that generated through taxes, for forest research to improve the health, productivity, and management of forest resources.</i>		7				
9.1.1	Current financial or in-kind support of research to address questions of relevance in the region of operations. The research will include some or all of the following issues: a. forest health, productivity, and ecosystem functions; b. chemical efficiency, use rate, and integrated pest management; c. water quality; d. wildlife management at stand or landscape levels; e. conservation of biological diversity; and f. effectiveness of BMPs.		7, 8				
9.2	<i>Program Participants shall individually, through cooperative efforts, or through associations develop or use state, provincial, or regional analyses in support of their sustainable forestry programs.</i>						
9.2.1	Participation, individually or through cooperative efforts or associations at the state, provincial, or regional level, in the development or use of a. regeneration assessments; b. growth-and-drain assessments; c. BMP implementation and compliance; and d. biodiversity conservation information for family forest owners.						

Objective 10: To improve the practice of sustainable forest management by resource professionals, logging professionals, and contractors through appropriate training and education programs.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or-	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			<u>C</u>	<u>EXR</u>	<u>Maj</u>	<u>Min</u>	
10.1	<i>Program Participants shall require appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities under the SFI Standard.</i>		7				
10.1.1	Written statement of commitment to the SFI Standard communicated throughout the organization, particularly to mill and woodland managers, wood procurement staff, and field foresters.		7, 8				
10.1.2	Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving SFI Standard objectives.		7				
10.1.3	Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.		7, 8				
10.1.4	Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.		7, 8				
10.2	<i>Program Participants shall work closely with state logging or forestry associations, or appropriate agencies or others in the forestry community, to foster improvement in the professionalism of wood producers.</i>		7				
10.2.1	Participation in or support of SFI Implementation Committees to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for wood producers' training courses that address a. awareness of sustainable forestry principles and the SFI Program; b. BMPs, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance, & retirement; c. regeneration, forest resource conservation, and aesthetics; 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. logging safety; f. U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations, wage and hour rules, and other employment laws; g. transportation issues; h. business management; and i. public policy and outreach.		7				

Objective 11: Commitment to comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, or local laws and regulations.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
11.1	<i>Program Participants shall take appropriate steps to comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws and regulations.</i>						
11.1.1	Access to relevant laws and regulations in appropriate locations.		7				
11.1.2	System to achieve compliance with applicable federal, provincial, state, or local laws and regulations.						
11.1.3	Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through available regulatory action information.		7				
11.1.4	Adherence to all applicable federal, state, & provincial regulations and international protocols for research & deployment of trees derived from improved planting stock & biotechnology.		7				
11.2	<i>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.</i>						
11.2.1	Written policy demonstrating commitment to comply with social laws, such as those covering civil rights, equal employment opportunities, antidiscrimination 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.						

Objective 12: To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry by encouraging the public and forestry community to participate in the commitment to sustainable forestry and publicly report progress.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or-	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
12.1	<i>Program Participants shall support and promote efforts by consulting foresters, state and federal agencies, state or local groups, professional societies, and the American Tree Farm System® and other landowner cooperative programs to apply principles of sustainable forest management.</i>						
12.1.1	Support for efforts of SFI Implementation Committees.		7				
12.1.2	Support for the development and distribution of educational materials, including information packets for use with forest landowners.						
12.1.3	Support for the development and distribution of regional or statewide information materials that provide landowners with practical approaches for addressing biological diversity issues, such as specific wildlife habitat, critically imperiled or imperiled species, and threatened and endangered species.						
12.1.4	Participation in efforts to support or promote conservation of working forests through voluntary market-based incentive programs (e.g., current-use taxation programs, Forest Legacy, or conservation easements).						
12.1.5	Program Participants are knowledgeable about credible regional conservation planning and priority-setting efforts that include a broad range of stakeholders. Consider the results of these efforts in planning where practical and consistent with management objectives.						
12.2	<i>Program Participants shall support and promote, at the state, provincial or other appropriate levels, mechanisms for public outreach, education, and involvement related to forest management.</i>		7				
12.2.1	Support for the SFI Implementation Committee program to address outreach, education, and technical assistance (e.g., toll-free numbers, public sector technical assistance programs).		7				
12.2.2	Periodic educational opportunities promoting sustainable forestry, such as a. field tours, seminars, or workshops; b. educational trips; c. self-guided forest management trails; or d. publication of articles, educational pamphlets, or newsletters; or e. support for state, provincial, and local forestry organizations and soil and water conservation districts.		7, 8				
12.2.3	Recreation opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.			7, 8			

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or-	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			C	EXR	Maj	Min	
12.3	<i>Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall participate in the development of public land planning and management processes.</i>			7			
12.3.1	Involvement in public land planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public.			7, 8			
12.3.2	Appropriate contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal, or independent collaboration.			7			
12.4	<i>Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall confer with affected indigenous peoples.</i>		7				
12.4.1	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; and c. address the sustainable use of nontimber forest products of value to indigenous peoples in areas where Program Participants have management responsibilities on public lands.		7, 8				
12.5	<i>Program Participants shall establish, at the state, provincial, or other appropriate levels, procedures to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, the public, or Program Participants regarding practices that appear inconsistent with the SFI Standard principles and objectives.</i>						
12.5.1	Support for SFI Implementation Committee efforts (toll-free numbers and other efforts) to address concerns about apparent nonconforming practices.		7				
12.5.2	Process to receive and respond to public inquiries.		7				
12.6	<i>Program Participants shall report annually to the SFI Program on their compliance with the SFI Standard.</i>		7				
12.6.1*	Prompt response to the SFI annual progress report. (*Note: This indicator will be reviewed in all audits.)		7, 8				
12.6.2	Recordkeeping for all the categories of information needed for SFI annual progress reports.		7				
12.6.3	Maintenance of copies of past reports to document progress and improvements to demonstrate conformance to the SFI Standard		7				

Objective 13: To promote continual improvement in the practice of sustainable forestry and monitor, measure, and report performance in achieving the commitment to sustainable forestry.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		<u>Audit</u> <u>-or</u>	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				<u>OFI</u>
			<u>C</u>	<u>EXR</u>	<u>Maj</u>	<u>Min</u>	
<i>13.1*</i>	<i>Program Participants shall establish a management review system to examine findings and progress in implementing the SFI Standard, to make appropriate improvements in programs, and to inform their employees of changes. (*This Performance Measure will be reviewed in all audits.)</i>		7, 8				
13.1.1	System to review commitments, programs, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.		7, 8				
13.1.2	System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving SFI Standard objectives and performance measures.		7, 8				
13.1.3	Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve SFI conformance.		7, 8				

Auditor Notes (Note to Auditors: The requirements are repeated here {in part or fully} to facilitate the use of this form. The Lead Auditor may choose to delete the requirement partially or fully to shorten the document, and/or to remove any requirements listed above as being “Not Applicable”. The full requirements are listed in the first section of the matrix above, which is not to be so edited.)

Requirement	Auditor	Notes
1.1	C	<i>“Program Participants shall ensure that long-term harvest levels are sustainable and consistent with appropriate growth and-yield models and written plans.”</i>
1.1.1	C	<p>“A long-term resource analysis to guide forest management planning at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the operation, including: a. a periodic or ongoing forest inventory; b. a land classification system; c. soils inventory and maps, where available; d. access to growth-and-yield modeling capabilities; e. up-to-date maps or a geographic information system (GIS); f. recommended sustainable harvest levels; and g. a review of nontimber issues (e.g., pilot projects and economic incentive programs to promote water protection, carbon storage, or biological diversity conservation).”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed updated county forest plans as follows: Langlade (April 9, 2007); Forest; Vilas (December 17, 2007) Iron (April 9, 2007); Bayfield; Douglas • Iron County and Douglas County (among others) forest inventory measurements now include snags, dens trees, and CWD.
1.1.2	C	<p>“Documentation of annual harvest trends in relation to the sustainable forest management plan.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer-generated reports are available from the WISFIRS Computer system for each county or for the entire system providing actual cut levels; these are generally consistent with or somewhat lower than planned levels. • Harvest trends are provided in management plans and the accompanying Environmental Assessments: <i>“In comparing County Forest harvesting to forest inventory analysis (FIA) growth data, approximately 76% of net growth is being harvested.”</i> Source: Iron County Assessment.
1.1.3	C	<p>“A forest inventory system and a method to calculate growth.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RECON is the inventory used for the entire system: “Recon is another tool in the assessment of geographical, structural, and compositional attributes of the forest resources. This information is collected and computerized in tabular format through the DNR. The recon system has historically been the backbone of land management activities. The tabular information is linked to spatial information on hand drawn maps or computerized maps found in the GIS. Basic resource information is collected, stored, and updated systematically and continuously. The database is used to analyze existing resources, evaluate management alternatives, and assist in the development and implementation of management plans.” Source: Vilas County Assessment
1.1.4	C	<p>“Periodic updates of inventory and recalculation of planned harvests.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant progress continues to be made on the RECON backlog. For example in Iron County the backlog of acres covered by inventory older than 1980 was reduced from 45% in 2003 to 32% currently. 21% are unmanaged types, so the actual backlog is estimated at only 11%. Douglas County has hired an inventory specialist and summer intern crews to significantly reduce their backlog, with a focus on high-priority sites. • At the auditor’s request a custom report was generated from the WISFIRS database at Langlade County showing RECON backlog by species; nearly half of the backlog there was in Aspen stands, which are least important for inventory updates because records do exist of age for each stand, and volumes/conditions can be easily estimated empirically. <u>Again a significant portion of the backlog is in unmanaged types or inaccessible locations.</u>
1.1.5	C	<p>“Documentation of forest practices (e.g., planting, fertilization, and thinning) consistent with assumptions in harvest plans.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of data in Environmental Assessment confirmed that plan assumptions that relate

		<p>to allowable harvests are conservative, and that needed cultural practices are implemented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed that WISFIRS has this data and that all foresters have access
2.1	C	<i>“Program Participants shall reforest after final harvest, unless delayed for site-specific environmental or forest health considerations, through artificial regeneration within two years or two planting seasons, or by planned natural regeneration methods within five years.”</i>
2.1.1	C	<p>“Designation of all management units for either natural or artificial regeneration.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural regeneration is the preferred method and planting is generally limited to special circumstances. In 2004 2,612 acres were planted across the 2.3 million acre system. Red pine is planted in the highest numbers, followed by Jack pine. The later is commonly planted in areas where natural jack pine regeneration is uncertain or delayed. Red and white pine mixtures are also planted on appropriate sites, and difficult-to-regenerate species such as hemlock and white birch are also planted. Red oak and white spruce are also planted as appropriate.
2.1.2	EXR	<p>“Clear Requirements to judge adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct under-stocked areas and achieve desired species composition and stocking rates for both artificial and natural regeneration.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed by field observations in all counties visited that foresters effectively employ appropriate silvicultural methods to ensure regeneration. Many county foresters are at the “cutting edge” of the practice, providing leadership in developing improved approaches operationally, working closely with state specialists, and serving on committees for revisions to the state’s silviculture handbook. Birch regeneration approaches and results in Douglas County Forest are one example. Efforts in Vilas County Forest and Douglas County Forest to assure the regeneration of Jack Pine in difficult circumstances are superb. Overly high deer populations are increasing the cost to regenerate forests in many locales, with particular problems in the northwest sands.
2.1.3	C	<p>“Minimized plantings of exotic tree species and research documentation that exotic tree species, planted operationally, pose minimal risk.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No exotics are planted; confirmed by field observations.
2.1.4	C	<p>“Protection of desirable or planned advanced natural regeneration during harvest.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed by field observations.
2.1.5	C	<p>“Artificial reforestation programs that consider potential ecological impacts of a different species or species mix from that which was harvested.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “It is recognized that as the second generation of Aspen matures there will be opportunities, at the time of harvest, to naturally convert a portion of some stands to White Pine. Conversion opportunities will be considered on a case by case basis and are not anticipated to have an appreciable effect on maintaining the current Aspen timber type of 14,941 acres.” Source: Vilas County Forestry Plan, pursuant to §28.11, Wis. Stats. Prior to conversions an assessment is made based on “A Guide to Forest Communities and Habitat Types of Northern Wisconsin Second Edition; Kotar, et al., 2002”. This planning tool provides guidance on upland site capability based on potential natural vegetation. Most conversions are made to revert stands back to types that were present prior to land settlement and severe wildfires of the late 1800s and early 1900s, and often when the stands are tending to revert on their own or contain species not well adapted to the site.
2.2		<i>“Program Participants shall minimize chemical use required to achieve management objectives while protecting employees, neighbors, the public and the forest environment.”</i>
2.2.1	C	<p>“Minimized chemical use required to achieve management objectives.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed chemical site preparation at sites in the Vilas County Forest, where Jack Pine is a featured species. Site preparation chemicals (Arsenal AC, Oust, Accord Concentrate) are applied at rates somewhat lower than label allows and are applied only as needed. No

		<p>recent efforts have been made to test even lower rates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Douglas County Forest has a policy prohibiting pesticide use. Recent Jack Pine Budworm outbreak followed by salvage has left many acres needing regeneration. Foresters employ varied and carefully designed site preparation methods to ensure regeneration.
2.2.3	C	<p>“Use of pesticides registered for the intended use and applied in accordance with the label requirements.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed by close review of chemical use at Vilas County, and discussions elsewhere, the process and intent for using only as per label.
2.2.4	C	<p>“Use of Integrated Pest Management where feasible.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPM is the approach taken in this program, as documented in the plans: <i>“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.”</i>
2.3	C	<p>“Program Participants shall implement management practices to protect and maintain forest and soil productivity.”</p>
2.3.1	C	<p>“Use of soils maps where available.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although soils information is provided in the county forest management plans the key tool for understanding site conditions is a habitat classification system developed for northern Wisconsin and in use extensively called “A Guide to Forest Communities and Habitat Types of Northern Wisconsin Second Edition; Kotar, et al., 2002”
2.3.2	C	<p>“Process to identify soils vulnerable to compaction and use of appropriate methods to avoid excessive soil disturbance.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foresters plan all harvests and consider soils and site-topography during sale planning and layout. The Kotar habitat classification system (see 2.3.1 above) is also useful. Confirmed extensive use of mitigation techniques on all active sales observed, including use of modern, low impact logging equipment, extensive harvest on snow-covered, frozen ground, careful planning of harvest units to avoid sensitive soils
2.3.3	OFI	<p>“Use of erosion control measures to minimize the loss of soil and site productivity.” <u>There is an opportunity to improve the implementation of road drainage BMPs.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most county forest road systems observed were in good condition; none observed were delivering sediment to streams or wetlands. Drainage-related BMPs for permanent roads are not consistently implemented, generally due to funding limitations. This included not having an adequate road surface material, road profiles not being crowned or sloped, and lack of ditching. Although no instances were seen where this deficiency resulted in sediments reaching streams or wetlands the lack of provisions for adequate drainage, particularly where roads are on sloping terrain, are affecting the useful life of the roads.
2.3.4	OFI	<p>“Post-harvest conditions conducive to maintaining site productivity (e.g., limited rutting, retained down woody debris, minimized skid trails).” <u>There is an opportunity to improve the guidelines for retention of coarse woody debris and for establishing limits to removal of wood fiber so as to maintain soil productivity, consistent with existing scientific knowledge.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field observations confirmed limited rutting, minimized skid trails, limited soil disturbance at all sites, and significant down woody debris at many sites. Some Aspen and Jack Pine clearcuts have lower levels of woody debris retained on the ground, but others had significant amounts. Utilization is very good; in most cases only a small portion of the tops are retained, and the trend is for increasing levels of utilization (biomass removals). Guidelines for appropriate levels of removal/retention are under development.

<p>2.3.5</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>“Retention of vigorous trees during partial harvesting, consistent with silvicultural norms for the area.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silviculture on the Wisconsin County Forests is required by required by County Forest Plans and DNR Manual code to be in accordance with the provisions of “<i>Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook 2431.5</i>”. • Observations in Northern hardwood stands and discussions with foresters showed an increased understanding of the application of state-of-the-art northern hardwood silviculture contained in the handbook. However recommendations to create canopy gaps are still not being effectively implemented in many cases, particularly with respect with the goal of creating gaps on 5 to 15% of the stand during each harvest entry. The Wisconsin DNR is continuing to emphasize this issue through training sessions and during field work. • Measures are being taken to enforce the silvicultural requirements, but not all foresters are in agreement, which has implications for productivity and efficiency. One forester in Iron County has regularly marked stands contrary to the provisions of the northern hardwood chapter, resulting in considerable additional work to conduct an assessment of the NH marking and also return with staff to remark the stands. If not corrected, this inappropriate marking would also delay development of NH regeneration as well as lead to a long term decline in sawlog quality and income for Iron County. If these stands had been cut as marked they would have constituted a non-conformance with this indicator. One site visited (and two others not visited) had undesignated trees cut; an investigation is ongoing.
<p>2.3.6</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>“Criteria that address harvesting and site preparation to protect soil productivity.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR has developed definition of an “excessive rut” and associated BMP guidelines. Counties used that definition as a benchmark and applied similar criteria to their local county. • Confirmed timber sale contract and most county forest plans contain rutting definitions and protocols to manage. For example, the Iron County Plan has it’s rutting policy in Section 915.4.
<p>2.3.7</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>“Minimized road construction to meet management objectives efficiently.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road systems observed were not excessive in extent. See 2.3.3 above for BMP-related issues on roads. • Many counties have developed comprehensive road use plans. The Douglas County Forest Road Use Plan (Chapter 700) incorporates many provisions to make multiple-use of most trails and roads, meeting the spirit and intent of the SFI indicator. The plan lists the following in the principles section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (10) Integrate existing recreational motor vehicle trails that currently are managed and maintained for public use with those that are not formally managed. (11) Eliminate the duplication of both existing and future routes and trails to minimize access density and to promote a more efficient network for public use; (12) Minimize routes and trails that cross drainages or stream crossings in recognition of fisheries and watershed management objectives. (13) Where appropriate, recommend changes in ordinance and/or policy to ensure orderly implementation of the Access Management Plan; (14) Emphasize that those who use the County Forest are responsible for obtaining current information on road and trail conditions and the proper use of roads and trails in all weather conditions.
<p>2.4</p>	<p>C</p>	<p><i>“Program Participants shall manage so as to protect forests from damaging agents such as environmentally or economically undesirable wildfire, pests and diseases to maintain and improve</i></p>

		<i>long-term forest health, productivity and economic viability.”</i>
2.4.1	C	<p>“Program to protect forests from damaging agents.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The county-state partnership and the systems employed to manage these forests clearly comprise a very strong forest protection program.
2.4.2	EXR	<p>“Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to minimize susceptibility to damaging agents.”</p> <p><u>Management efforts and results in terms of forest health are exceptional.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed by field observations. Iron County Forest has shifted emphasis to include timely treatment of Aspen and other types (beyond Northern hardwoods) to ensure that stands are kept at appropriate stocking levels. Observations throughout the system confirm that efforts to maintain proper stocking are resulting in stands that are generally quite healthy and productive. Jack Pine budworm infestations are monitored and salvage and sanitation treatments are timely and appropriate.
2.4.3	C	<p>“Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control programs.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Douglas County Forestry Department is an important participant in regional fire control efforts. County foresters routinely participate in fire control activities.
2.5		<i>“Program Participants that utilize genetically improved planting stock including those derived through biotechnology shall use sound scientific methods and follow all applicable laws and other internationally applicable protocols.”</i>
2.5.1		<p>“Program for appropriate research, testing, evaluation and deployment of genetically improved planting stock including trees derived through biotechnology.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">
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 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved state water quality programs other applicable federal, provincial, state or local programs.”
3.1.1	OFI	<p>“Program to implement state or provincial equivalent BMPs during all phases of management activities.”</p> <p><u>See OFI under Indicator 2.3.3 above.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most county forest road systems observed were in good condition; none observed were delivering sediment to streams or wetlands. Drainage-related BMPs for permanent roads are not consistently implemented, generally due to funding limitations. This included not having an adequate road surface material, road profiles not being crowned or sloped, and lack of ditching. Although no instances were seen where this deficiency resulted in sediments reaching streams or wetlands the lack of provisions for adequate drainage, particularly where roads are on sloping terrain, are affecting the useful life of the roads. Foresters and loggers are trained; foresters layout and inspect all jobs.
3.1.2		<p>“Contract provisions that specify BMP compliance.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new contracts contain BMP provisions. This was confirmed for a sample of timber sales.
3.1.3		<p>“Plans that address wet weather events (e.g., inventory systems, wet weather tracts, defining acceptable operational conditions, etc).”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">
3.1.4	C	<p>“Monitoring of overall BMP implementation.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iron County Forestry Sale Inspection Report is now used to document each sale inspection. Similar approaches are in place in the other counties visited. Bridges are inspected and a roads report is prepared every two years on the funded portions of the county forest road system.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An emerging issue involves OHVs: “Motorized recreation is popular and increasing; the consequences of which will be increased trail use, requests for additional riding opportunities, increased user conflicts, increased noise pollution, added staff costs, and isolated instances of environmental damage (as described in sections 15 and 16, above). Monitoring and maintenance of trail and off-trail use will be essential in order to prevent future ecological damage... The environmental consequences of existing and projected land use on the Forest County Forest will be minimized through careful planning and monitoring of the various land uses. Locating trails and facilities in areas that are capable of withstanding increased use is the main way in which environmental impacts can be minimized. Monitoring the use of these trails and facilities through frequent inspections will also help minimize the impacts. In the event that the increased uses of these of these areas show signs of environmental impacts, steps will be taken to minimize or eliminate these impacts. This may include seasonal or temporary closures, permanent closures, trail rerouting and trail stabilization.” Source: Environmental Analysis And Decision On The Need For An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
3.2		<i>“Program Participant shall have or develop, implement, and document, riparian protection measures based on soil type, terrain, vegetation and other applicable factors.”</i>
3.2.1		“Program addressing management and protection of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones.” <ul style="list-style-type: none">
3.2.2		“Mapping of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones, and where appropriate, identification on the ground.” <ul style="list-style-type: none">
3.2.3	C	“Implementation of plans to manage or protect streams, lakes and other water bodies.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed by field observations.
3.2.4		“Identification and protection of nonforested wetlands, including bogs, fens, vernal pools and marshes of significant size.” <ul style="list-style-type: none">
3.2.5	NA	“Where regulations or BMPs do not currently exist to protect riparian areas, use of experts to identify appropriate protection measures.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA
4.1	C	<i>“Program participants shall have programs to promote biological diversity at stand- and landscape- scales.”</i>
4.1.1	OFI (2)	<p>“Program to promote the conservation of native biological diversity, including species, wildlife habitats, and ecological or natural community types, at stand and landscape levels.”</p> <p><u>There is an opportunity to improve training for awareness of, and ability to identify new sites for, rare, threatened, or uncommon species and/or uncommon or exemplary natural community types.</u></p> <p><u>There is an opportunity to improve training on the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan and the use of this report and other tools to protect and maintain biodiversity.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “130.1.6 Wildlife: The Langlade County Forest is habitat for wildlife common to northern Wisconsin. No formal survey has been conducted to identify or inventory the fauna occurring on the Forest.” “On-going browsing by high deer populations is also impacting regeneration of a number of forest species.” Source: Source: Environmental Analysis And Decision On The Need For An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
4.1.2	C	“Program to protect threatened and endangered species.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each counties’ forest management plan contains a listing of endangered and threatened species.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “One particular species, the Karner Blue butterfly, is governed by a habitat conservation plan. Eight of the County Forests (Burnett, Clark, Eau Claire, Jackson, Juneau, Monroe, Washburn and Wood) are active partners in implementation of the Karner Blue Butterfly Habitat Conservation Plan (KBBHCP). The KBB has been federally listed as an endangered species since 1992. The Plan allows for “incidental taking” of KBB during legally allowable activities such as timber sales if certain conditions are agreed to. These counties conduct surveys for KBB and their habitat as a normal part of their timber sale programs. Their participation in the Habitat Conservation Plan ensures that the species and its habitat will continue to flourish in Wisconsin. Additional areas and habitat suitable for KBB may result from the on-going surveys.” • “As part of the County Forest planning process DNR Bureau of Endangered Resources staff have corresponded with the individual County Forests in an effort to identify opportunities for maintaining ecological reference areas, high quality natural communities, and potential natural areas. This process focuses on the ecological opportunities referenced under the “Affected Environment” section of the EA. Some of these sites have exceptional ecological values found nowhere else in the State. Recognition of these areas on a County Forest does not necessarily preclude management activities so long as any management retains the characteristics that make it unique. Generally these areas are managed differently and less intensively than other parts of the forest. This usually means there is less economic return on these areas to the counties / towns. However, there is an ecological value for retaining these sites from a statewide perspective. This effort also contributes to implementation of ecosystem management principles. The County Forests currently have 24 natural areas designated in 12 different counties that total over 12,000 acres. Additional unique areas are also protected, although not formally designated.”
4.1.3	C	<p>“Plans to locate and protect known sites associated with viable occurrences of critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities. 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.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good procedures for WDNR Liaison Forester to check the NHI (heritage) database for known sites. County foresters are able to access the NHI database if they take the training. Confirmed with Eric Rantala, Assistant Langlade County Forest Administrator. • Many of the plants and animals noted in the Langlade County plan are in wetlands, but the staff didn’t know for certain what they might be and where they might be. When setting up sales in winter it can be difficult to see unique features.
4.1.4	Minor	<p>“Development and implementation of criteria, as guided by regionally appropriate science, for retention of stand-level wildlife habitat elements (e.g., snags, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees, nest trees).”</p> <p><u>Minor Non-conformance SFI-2008-1: The Wisconsin County Forest Program has not developed and implemented criteria for stand level habitat retention elements* consistent with stated goals for maintenance of biodiversity. *(for example live trees reserved from harvest, snags, den trees, nest trees, structural features such as conifer inclusions in hardwood stands).</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even-aged harvests often lack retention of larger trees, and occasionally have no retention; • Habitat requirements for American marten (Wisconsin endangered) are not explicitly provided for in stand prescriptions or other written guidelines (note: this species is not expected to range beyond certain LTAs); • Provisions are not in place for recruitment of large diameter trees as sources of future large cavity trees or large down woody debris.
4.1.5	EXR	<p>“Assessment, conducted individually or collaboratively, of forest cover types and habitats at the individual ownership level and, where credible data are available, across the landscape, and incorporation of findings into planning and management activities, where practical and when consistent with management objectives.”</p> <p><u>The role of the county forests in providing for the maintenance of declining but important forest types such as Aspen or Birch forests constitutes an exceptional practice.</u></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest composition will be impacted by the actions of the County Forests over the next planning period. For forest species, changes to the northern hardwood and “pioneer” species are the most noteworthy. Northern hardwood is projected to increase in acreage (+21,000 acres) while aspen (-27,000 acres), white birch (-4000 acres), and oak (-33,000 acres) are projected to decrease (see Table 3). Anticipated changes in the forest type composition of the Forest County Forest are highlighted in Table 3a. This is mainly a result of natural succession occurring. The more shade tolerant northern hardwood species (sugar maple, basswood, ash) are gradually encroaching into the stands of sun-loving aspen, white birch, and oak. Pioneer species resulted from the heavy cutting and devastating fires of the early 1900’s and once comprised the vast majority of the timber types on the County Forests. Natural succession is occurring across all of Wisconsin but perhaps less so on County Forest lands. Maintaining aspen, a key component of the forest products industry and critical habitat for a number of game species, is important to the County Forests. While the County Forests contain only 15% of the State’s forests, they contain nearly 28% of the State’s aspen. This is a niche the County Forests serve in Wisconsin since management of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forests and State Forests are shifting more dramatically to more all-aged forests. The combination of these management philosophies provides for both those species that favor large block, all-aged forests and those that prefer even-aged types with lots of “edge”. Source: Environmental Analysis And Decision On The Need For An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - Forest County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan • The Environmental Assessment for most counties states: <i>“Maintaining or conserving forest types such as jack pine, northern white cedar, hemlock, and white birch has been identified as regionally important. Reduction of fragmentation will improve environmental corridors for wildlife. The County Forests are also maintaining more of the aspen type than other public entities. A focus on diversifying the ages and distribution patterns on this timber type is important to the regional ecology.”</i> Confirmed by field observations of planned and completed harvests that major efforts are made to promote birch regeneration (Langlade) and to diversity the aspen age and distribution patterns (all counties). • Confirmed actions in the field consistent with following: <i>“Jack Pine Management: Jack Pine occurs throughout the Vilas County Forest on sandy soils. The establishment of Jack Pine on these soils naturally followed the severe fires of the late 1800’s and early 1900’s. During the late 1930’s and early 1940’s plantations of Jack Pine were established by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the aftermath of wildfires and failed farms. Due to the characteristics of being shade intolerant and short lived there is a decline of the presence of Jack Pine in the region of the Northern Great Lakes as stands are converting to other species. Because of the regional decline of this timber sype and the characteristics of Jack Pine to withstand frost and droughty soils, it is the goal of the Vilas County Forest to maintain the acres of Jack Pine type with minimal conversion to other species. There are 5,491 acres of Jack Pine timber type currently within the Forest.”</i> Source: Vilas County Forestry Plan, pursuant to §28.11, Wis. Stats. • Langlade County: Wisconsin DNR biologist provides guidance on osprey nests.
4.1.6	C	<p>“Support of and participation in plans or programs for the conservation of old-growth forests in the region of ownership.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest County has set aside from harvest an old-growth hemlock stand. • Iron County has also made provisions as follows (from plan): Old Growth / Benchmark Stands: <i>“Iron County Forestry has designated the Penokee Range Biological Reserve as a “no management zone.” As a result this area, approximately 2500 acres, may be a future Old Growth benchmark. Other areas of the Iron County Forest that will be reserved for Old Growth include those listed in Chapter 530 High Conservation Value Forests/Areas and Exceptional Resources.”</i>
4.2	C	<p><i>“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.”</i></p>

4.2.1	C	<p>“Collection of information on critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities 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 nonproprietary scientific information, time, and assistance by staff, or in-kind or direct financial support.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the recently completed county forest plans confirms that such information is included, and considered in development of harvest prescriptions.
4.2.2	C	<p>“A methodology to incorporate research results and field applications of biodiversity and ecosystem research into forest management decisions.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained biologists are available throughout the system.
5.1	C	<p><i>“Program Participants shall manage the impact of harvesting on visual quality.”</i></p>
5.1.1	C	<p>“Program to address visual quality management.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed by field observations and discussions with foresters.
5.1.2	C	<p>“Incorporation of aesthetic considerations in harvesting, road, landing design and management, and other management activities where visual impacts are a concern.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed by field observations that most sites are planned to minimize visual impacts. Some clearcut harvests observed have considerable slash remaining on site alongside infrequently-used roads, but this practice is very common in the area and generally not a concern. Foresters are listening to local concerns, and take measures in areas where visual issues are important.
5.2		<p><i>“Program Participants shall manage the size, shape, and placement of clearcut harvests.”</i></p>
5.2.1	C	<p>“Average size of clearcut harvest areas does not exceed 120 acres, except when necessary to respond to forest health emergencies or other natural catastrophes.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed by field observations.
6.1.	C	<p><i>“Program Participants shall identify special sites and manage them in a manner appropriate for their unique features.”</i></p>
6.1.1	C	<p>“Use of existing natural heritage data and expert advice in identifying or selecting sites for protection because of their ecologically, geologically, historically, or culturally important qualities.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “A review of the State Historical Society database is performed on all timber sales. Mitigation efforts are implemented on areas of cultural significance. These areas are often excluded from sale areas or where ground-disturbing activities are planned. In some instances, by harvesting in the winter or using specialized equipment, it is possible to follow through on activities without impacting the cultural resources. The DNR Archeologist is available for consultation. There have also been efforts in many counties to contact local Tribes for additional information that may not be on the existing database.” Source: Environmental Analysis And Decision On The Need For An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
6.1.2	C	<p>“Appropriate mapping, cataloging, and management of identified special sites.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Langlade County Forest Management Plan contains maps of special sites, including “Endangered Resources Areas, State Natural Areas, and Special Use Areas. The plan includes limited management direction for these areas as appropriate. Once sites are identified Wisconsin DNR has specialists available to provide guidance.
7.1	C	<p><i>“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.”</i></p>
7.1.1	C	<p>“Program or monitoring system to ensure efficient utilization, which may include...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field observations confirmed good to excellent utilization. Foresters regularly monitor sales for utilization. Landings in completed sales do not have chunks or unused logs. Contract clauses requiring good utilization were included in contracts reviewed.

9.1		<i>“Program Participants shall individually, through cooperative efforts, or through associations provide in-kind support or funding, in addition to that generated through taxes, for forest research to improve the health, productivity, & management of forest resources.”</i>
9.1.1	C	<p>“Current financial or in-kind support of research to address questions of relevance in the region of operations. The research will include ...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vilas County Plan includes a section (810.1.9) covering Local Silvicultural Field Trials as follows: “ To date, numerous field trials have been completed or are ongoing on the County Forest. These trials include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tree shelters applied to protect Red Oak seedlings from deer damage. This trial established in cooperation with the USDA Northcentral Forest Experiment Station. 2. Liquid deer repellent application to White Birch seedlings. 3. Budcapping of Jack Pine, White Pine, Red Pine, and Red Oak seedlings for browse protection by deer. 4. Outplanting of Jack Pine seedlings grown in a deer repellent medium. This trial is established in cooperation with Wisconsin DNR Hayward Nursery. • A compilation of silvicultural trials on State and County lands is available online: http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/silviculture/ • Vilas County is providing sites for a study of the use of sapling and pole Aspen stands by birds, conducted by a graduate student from the Michigan Tech.; and for a UWSP study involving searching for signs of cougar.
9.2		<i>“Program Participants shall individually, through cooperative efforts, or through associations develop or use state, provincial, or regional analyses in support of their sustainable forestry programs.”</i>
10.1		<i>“Program Participants shall require appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities under the SFI Standard.”</i>
10.1.1	C	<p>“Written statement of commitment to the SFI Standard communicated throughout the organization, particularly to mill and woodland managers, wood procurement staff, and field foresters.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commitment to SFI is communicated very well, including a section in the management plan and prominent role in the Wisconsin County Forest Association’s activities and meetings, which are well attended and run.
10.1.2		<p>“Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving SFI Standard objectives.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
10.1.3	C	<p>“Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foresters working for the Wisconsin DNR and for the counties visited were all well-trained and very knowledgeable. • Douglas County Forest maintains good training records. Foresters are afforded many opportunities for training, including specialized training that may require travel.
10.1.4	C	<p>“Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FISTA training required of all contractors.
10.2		<i>“Program Participants shall work closely with state logging or forestry associations, or appropriate agencies or others in the forestry community, to foster improvement in the professionalism of wood producers.”</i>
10.2.1 (12.1.1, 12.2.1, and 12.5.1)		<p>“Participation in or support of SFI Implementation Committees to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for wood producers’ training courses...”</p> <p>Note: Indicators 10.2.1, 12.1.1, 12.2.1, and 12.5.1 all relate to SFI Implementation Committee activities. Description of evidence may be included here for all of these indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

11.1		<i>“Program Participants shall take appropriate steps to comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws and regulations.”</i>
12.1		<i>“Program Participants shall support and promote efforts by consulting foresters, state and federal agencies, state or local groups, professional societies, and the American Tree Farm System® and other landowner cooperative programs to apply principles of sustainable forest management.”</i>
12.1.1		“Support for efforts of SFI Implementation Committees.” •
12.1.2		“Support for the development and distribution of educational materials, including information packets for use with forest landowners.” •
12.1.3		“Support for the development and distribution of regional or statewide information materials that provide landowners with practical approaches for addressing biological diversity issues, such as specific wildlife habitat, critically imperiled or imperiled species, and threatened and endangered species.” •
12.1.4		“Participation in efforts to support or promote conservation of working forests through voluntary market-based incentive programs (e.g., current-use taxation programs, Forest Legacy, or conservation easements).” •
12.1.5		“Program Participants are knowledgeable about credible regional conservation planning and priority-setting efforts that include a broad range of stakeholders. Consider the results of these efforts in planning where practical and consistent with management objectives.” •
12.2		<i>“Program Participants shall support and promote, at the state, provincial or other appropriate levels, mechanisms for public outreach, education, and involvement related to forest management.”</i>
12.2.1		“Support for the SFI Implementation Committee program to address outreach, education, and technical assistance (e.g., toll-free numbers, public sector technical assistance programs).” •
12.2.2	C	“Periodic educational opportunities promoting sustainable forestry, such as ...” • Vilas County forestry staff is involved in several important forestry education activities including: Support for “Trees for Tomorrow” based locally in Eagle River, including tours of active harvests and support for their “Careers Workshop”; participation in an Earth Day project each year with local schools, and support and involvement in teacher training
12.2.3	EXR	“Recreation opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.” <u>The Wisconsin County Forests provide an exemplary array of recreation opportunities; forest management is implemented so as to enhance these.</u> • Langlade County Forest Management Plan contains maps of recreation sites, including “Managed Trail Areas, Formal Recreation Areas, Funded Snowmobile Trails, Funded ATV Trails, and Special Use Areas. The plan includes management direction for all of these areas as appropriate. • Douglas County Forests are managed and used for varied recreation uses; facilities and programs are first-rate. • “Environmental damage from improper motorized recreation has occurred and continues to be a challenge for counties. There is nearly a 50 / 50 split of ATV policies across the County Forest program. Approximately one-half of the forests are “open unless posted (signing, berms, gates) closed” and the other one-half are “closed unless posted open” (designated). ATV use on the Forest County Forest is closed unless posted open” (designated).” Source: Assessment
12.3		<i>“Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall participate in the development of public land planning and management processes.”</i>

12.3.1	EXR	<p>“Involvement in public land planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public.” <u>The county forests provide a model for citizen participation, with leadership from each county forest committee.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County and State land planning and management activities are closely coordinated through the use of the Liaison foresters and by incorporating state forest management, private forestry, and county forestry activities within the same administrative line-staff field organization. County forests are managed by elected county board members (through a forestry committee that is a sub-set of the full board). Confirmed through review of planning procedures and records of public meetings that extensive public opportunities for comment were employed during the recent effort to update all county plans. • County forests are run by the citizens; Public members can comment during any monthly county forestry committee meeting.
12.3.2		<p>“Appropriate contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal, or independent collaboration.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
12.4		<p><i>“Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall confer with affected indigenous peoples.”</i></p>
12.4.1	C	<p>“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; and c. address the sustainable use of nontimber forest products of value to indigenous peoples in areas where Program Participants have management responsibilities on public lands.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts are regularly made to contact tribal representatives to exchange information. • Iron County Forest hand delivered draft and final copies of the plan to local tribes.
12.5		<p><i>“Program Participants shall establish, at the state, provincial, or other appropriate levels, procedures to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, the public, or Program Participants regarding practices that appear inconsistent with the SFI Standard principles and objectives.”</i></p>
12.5.1		<p>“Support for SFI Implementation Committee efforts (toll-free numbers and other efforts) to address concerns about apparent nonconforming practices.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
12.5.2		<p>“Process to receive and respond to public inquiries.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
12.6		<p><i>“Program Participants shall report annually to the SFI Program on their compliance with the SFI Standard.”</i></p>
12.6.1*	C	<p>“Prompt response to the SFI annual progress report.” (*Note: This indicator will be reviewed in all audits.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed with SFI, Inc.
13.1*	C	<p><i>“Program Participants shall establish a management review system to examine findings and progress in implementing the SFI Standard, to make appropriate improvements in programs, and to inform their employees of changes.”</i></p>
13.1.1	C	<p>“System to review commitments, programs, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR's internal group compliance includes internal audits every 3 yrs. and forest certification compliance and follow through is incorporated into those audits. Annual work plans are submitted by each County and reviewed and approved by DNR. Regular communication between the County staff and local DNR Liaison & Team Leader also evaluate effectiveness.
13.1.2	C	<p>“System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving SFI Standard objectives and performance measures.”</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DNR's internal group compliance includes internal audits every 3 yrs. and forest certification compliance and follow through is incorporated into those audits. Annual work plans are submitted by each County and reviewed and approved by DNR. Regular communication between the County staff and local DNR Liaison & Team Leader also evaluate effectiveness.
13.1.3	C	<p>“Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve SFI conformance.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed that an annual meeting is held with WDNR management staff. On the County side, certification progress reports to the WCFA Bd. of Directors are made jointly by the County Forest Specialist & WCFA Executive Director.

Audit Activities:

5.19.08

Reviewed Wisconsin DNR files of supporting documents for the three open FSC CARs, the SFI OFIs, and the FSC Recommendations.

Brief Team Meeting and Meeting with WDNR to discuss audit plan

Review Management Plans

5.20.08 to 5.23

Field Audits as per audit plan

See Appendix II for Attendees and Field Sites

5.23.08 Closing Meeting