

December 2, 2009

SFI Certification Audit Report

**Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Standard
2005-2009 Edition**



For The

Wisconsin County Forestry Program

December 2, 2009

Mike Ferrucci

NSF-ISR

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Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Public Audit Report

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

The 25 participating Wisconsin County Forests have been certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Standard since December 10, 2004 (SFI certificate #NSF-SFIS-1Y943). The “continuous surveillance option” was used to update the certificate to the 2005-2009 Edition in February, 2006. Since the initial certification the program has undergone third-party audits each year. This report describes the most recent audit that resulted in recertification of the program and the award of another 5-year certificate.

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 2,188,793 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 per year.

The Wisconsin County Forest’s SFI Program is managed by Jeffrey Barkley, County Forests Specialist, supported by Paul Pingrey, Forest Certification Coordinator. 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.

SFIS Audit Process

The audit was performed by NSF-ISR on August 17 – 24, 2009 by an audit team headed by Mike Ferrucci, Lead Auditor. The other members of the audit team included Dave Wager, FSC Lead Auditor and Forest Ecologist; Gary Zimmer, Wildlife Biologist; and JoAnn Hanowski, Avian Ecologist. Audit team members fulfill the qualification criteria for conducting SFIS Certification Audits contained in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Audit Procedures and Qualifications (SFI APQ) 2005–2009 Edition. Follow-up or Surveillance Audits are required by the 2005-2009

Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard ®. The initial Surveillance Audit is scheduled for August 11 to 13, 2010.

The 2009 audit was conducted in conjunction with an FSC audit covering many of the same counties, the same organizational approach, and by the same audit team. The two processes (SFI and FSC) shared audit teams and reviewed much of the same evidence, but each program had a different team leader and audit objectives. This report is intended to describe the SFI portion of the evaluation only. More information about the FSC portion of the evaluation is available from Wisconsin DNR.

The objective of the audit was to assess continuing conformance of the program'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, 2007. 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
- Objective 8 – Procurement Requirements

The NSF-ISR SFI Certification Audit was governed by an audit plan designed to enable the audit team to determine conformance with the applicable SFI requirements. The plan included provisions for the assembly and review of audit evidence consisting of documents, interviews, and on-site inspections of ongoing or completed forest practices.

During the audit NSF-ISR reviewed a sample of the written documentation assembled to provide objective evidence of SFIS Conformance. NSF-ISR also selected field sites for inspection based upon the risk of environmental impact, likelihood of occurrence, special features, and other criteria outlined in the NSF-ISR SFI-SOP. NSF-ISR also selected and interviewed stakeholders such as contract loggers, landowners and other interested parties, and interviewed employees within the organization to confirm that the SFI Standard was understood and actively implemented.

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

Audit Findings

Wisconsin County Forest Program's SFI Program was found to be in substantial conformance with the SFIS Standard. There were two Major Non-Conformances identified involving issues

that were elevated from Minor Non-Conformances associated with the 2008 audit; at the time of the audit (August, 2009) the program had not:

- Consistently implemented stand level habitat retention elements (Indicator 4.1.4), or
- Consistently used contract provisions that specify BMP compliance (Indicator 3.1.2).

The program's plan to resolve these issues was sufficiently implemented by November 30, 2009 to close these Major CARs. For the first issue, significant training effort on stand level habitat retention was completed, with ongoing emphasis expected. Marking & Tree retention training was conducted as a part of 5 well-attended Biomass Training Sessions, and 22 area tree retention contacts were established and trained. Standardized contract provisions specifying BMP compliance have been added in all counties, addressing the second issue.

There was also one Minor Non-Conformance involving excessive rutting associated with two timber sales reviewed (Indicator 2.3.4). A corrective action plan has been developed by Wisconsin DNR and approved by NSF. The program will increase emphasis on this issue in future harvests, training, and during program reviews.

The NSF-ISR Audit team also reviewed previously closed minor non-conformances and issues raised during past audits. In most cases, the team found that the Wisconsin County Forest Program continues to consistently implement appropriate corrective actions. The issues have included: road and trail maintenance, training for harvesting contractors, tribal consultation, the internal review process, pesticide use, policies to define and prevent excessive rutting and to protect soil productivity, efforts to identify and protect or exceptional resource areas, advances in Northern Hardwood Silviculture, development and implementation of biomass harvesting guidelines, and BMPs for Invasive species. The program should be commended for its continuing attention to these issues and significant progress in improving practices in many of these areas.

Some areas for continuing emphasis were also identified. In the SFI system these are termed "opportunities for improvement" (OFI). Such findings do not indicate a current deficiency with respect to the standard, but served to alert Wisconsin County Forest Program to areas that could be strengthened or which could merit future attention. The 2009 OFIs include:

There is an opportunity to assess the system for tracking regeneration in stands managed under selection silviculture (group selection/individual tree selection). (SFI Indicator 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 & natural regeneration.")

There is an opportunity to improve monitoring of impacts to soil and water resources from ATV use. (SFI Indicator 3.1.4 "Monitoring of overall BMP implementation.")

There is an opportunity to improve by developing BMPs for vernal pools. SFI Indicator 3.2.5 ("Where regulations or BMPs do not currently exist to protect riparian areas, use of experts to identify appropriate protection measures.")

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.

(SFI Indicator 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.")

There is an opportunity to incorporate the information provided in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan and related tools to protect and maintain biodiversity. (Also SFI Indicator 4.1.1)

There is an opportunity to improve training on the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan and associated information.

(SFI Indicator 10.1.3 “Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.”)

There is an opportunity to improve the system of ensuring that SFI requirements are fully implemented by all involved counties (Liaison Foresters in all counties) to ensure that it is consistently applied.

(SFI Indicator 13.1.1 “System to review commitments, programs, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.”)

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

Management efforts and results in terms of forest health are exceptional.

(SFI Performance Measure 2.4 “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.”)

The program exceeds the standard for minimizing clearcut size.

(SFI Indicator 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.”)

The Wisconsin County Forests provide an exemplary array of recreation opportunities; forest management is implemented to enhance these.

(SFI Indicator 12.2.3 “Recreation opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.”)

The county forests provide a model for citizen participation through the county forest committees.

(SFI Performance Measure 12.1.3 “Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall participate in the development of public land planning and management processes.”)

For More Information Contact:

Jeffrey Barkley, County Forests Specialist
Wisconsin DNR – Forestry Division
101 S Webster Street - FR/4, Madison WI 53703
jeffrey.barkley@wisconsin.gov 608-264-9217

or

Mike Ferrucci, SFI Program Manager
NSF-International Strategic Registrations
789 N. Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor, MI 48105
203-887-9248 (Corporate Office Phone 1-888-NSF-9000) <http://www.nsf-isr.org>

Relevance of Forestry Certification

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

1. Sustainable Forestry

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

2. Responsible Practices

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

3. Reforestation and Productive Capacity

To provide for regeneration after harvest and maintain the productive capacity of the forestland base.

4. Forest Health and Productivity

To protect forests from uncharacteristic and economically or environmentally undesirable wildfire, pests, diseases, and other damaging agents and thus maintain and improve long-term forest health and productivity.

5. Long-Term Forest and Soil Productivity

To protect and maintain long-term forest and soil productivity.

6. Protection of Water Resources

To protect water bodies and riparian zones.

7. Protection of Special Sites and Biological Diversity

To manage forests and lands of special significance (biologically, geologically, historically or culturally important) in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities and to promote a diversity of wildlife habitats, forest types, and ecological or natural community types.

8. Legal Compliance

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

9. Continual Improvement

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

Source: Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Standard, 2005–2009 Edition

END OF PUBLIC REPORT

Other Required Information

Audit Team

The audit team is fully qualified to conduct the SFI Certification Audit, with an understanding of the forest industry, certification requirements of the SFI Standard, and of sustainable forestry practices within your region. Qualifications of audit team members are described in the Audit Plan (attached as Section A).

Confidentiality

NSF requires all auditors to adhere to strict agreements regarding confidentiality and prohibiting consulting during audits. A copy of this agreement is available from NSF on request.

Scope of Audit

The scope statement to appear on the certificate is as follows:

The sustainable forestry activities and land management operations of participating counties within the Wisconsin County Forest System, encompassing approximately 2,188,793 acres of forestland in the following 25 counties: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Eau Claire, Florence, Forest, Iron, Jackson, Juneau, Langulade, Lincoln, Marathon, Marinette, Oconto, Oneida, Polk, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, Vilas, Washburn, and Wood.

NSF-ISR SFI Audit Process and Reporting

The NSF-ISR Audit Report consists of all documents used in the audit process, including the Readiness Review, the Tentative Audit Plan, and the Re-Certification Audit documents. The findings of the Readiness Review Report including the Document Review were provided previously.

The actual NSF-ISR SFI Certification Audit was governed by a detailed Audit Plan that was prepared specifically for your SFI Audit. The Audit Plan is included here as Section A (with various Attachments). The Audit Plan was focused on helping the audit team determine whether there were any deficiencies and inconsistencies between your SFI Program and the SFIS requirements that apply to your organization.

As described in the Audit Plan, the objective of the audit was to assess conformance of your SFI Program to the requirements of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Standard, 2005-2009 Edition. The possible findings of the audit included Full Conformance, Major Non-conformance, Minor Non-conformance, Opportunities for Improvement, and Practices that exceeded the Basic Requirements of the SFIS. The detailed spreadsheets addressing the above findings are contained in the SFI Certification Audit Matrix (Section B). Any non-conformances were fully documented and reported using the NSF-ISR Corrective Action Request forms (Section C).

NSF-ISR also identified a number of forest practices and operations that exceed the basic requirements of the SFI Standard. These practices are documented in the SFI Certification Audit Matrix and summarized in the Public Report section. Your organization is to be commended for performance above and beyond the basic requirements of the SFIS in the areas specified.

Completion of Certification Process

This complete Final Report is the sole property of your organization and will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and privacy. The report is intended for use by your organization in understanding your conformance with the SFI Standard and for purposes of improving your SFI Program. NSF may provide copies of the report to audit team members.

The Public Audit Report section provides a summary of the audit results intended for public disclosure. If necessary, NSF's SFI Program Manager can work with your designee to modify the summary, consistent with SFI requirements, to meet your needs. The 2005–2009 Edition Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Audit Procedures and Qualifications (SFI APQ) requires:

A Certified Program Participant shall provide a report to the SFI Inc. not less than two weeks after the successful completion of certification, recertification, or surveillance audit to the 2005-2009 SFI Standard. The public report will be posted on the SFI Inc. website and available for public review.

The Lead Auditor may, at your direction, provide a copy of the final SFI Public Report to SFI, Inc. NSF must also provide the SFI Reporting Form (Section D) to SFI, Inc; the data from the form are posted on various certification-tracking websites.

You are responsible for informing NSF immediately regarding any change to your program or ownership that would affect the accuracy of the certificate. NSF will work with you to accommodate these changes.

Within 4 to 8 weeks NSF-ISR will issue a formal Certificate of Conformance to the SFI Standard to your organization. The Certificate includes the NSF-ISR Logo, your organization's name, the standard certified to, the date of the certification, and signatures of responsible authorities.

Follow-up or Surveillance Audits are required by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard ®. The initial Surveillance Audit is scheduled for August 11-13, 2010. The assigned lead auditor will contact you 2 months prior to this date to reconfirm and begin preparations. This audit can assess the program against the 2005-2009 Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard but will include an assessment of progress towards implementing the 2010-2014 SFI Standard by the end of 2010. Future audits will be against the 2010-2014 SFIS.

Certification Report Sections:

Section A Audit Plan

Section B SFI Certification Audit Matrix

Section C NSF-ISR Corrective Action Request (CAR) forms

Section D SFI Reporting Form



Section A
Audit Plan



July 24, 2009

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 Recertification Audit for the Wisconsin County Forest System on August 17 to 24 as provided below and on the attached proposed itinerary.

This is a complete review of your SFI and FSC Programs to confirm that they continue to be in conformance with all of the requirements and that progress is being made in closing your CARs. The audit team will consist of Mike Ferrucci, NSF-ISR Lead Auditor, Dave Wager, SCS Lead auditor, Gary Zimmer, Team Auditor, and JoAnn Hanowski, Team Auditor. During the audit we will follow the audit protocols described in the following pages.

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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Ferrucci".

Mike Ferrucci
SFI Program Manager, NSF-ISR
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Phone: 406-251-7049 Cell: 510-708-0397

2009 Wisconsin County Forest Audit Schedule

Rev. 7/24/09

Sunday August 16

Audit team travels to Eau Claire

Audit Team: Northern Team – Mike Ferrucci (SFI Lead) and Gary Zimmer

Southern Team – Dave Wager (FSC Lead) and JoAnn Hanowski

Audit team meeting

Monday August 17 *

8 am to Noon – Eau Claire

- Opening meeting
- Review open CARs
- Administrative Review

12:30 pm Begin Individual County Audits

- 4-person team Chippewa County, 33,107 acres, FSC only – 12:30 – 5 PM

Tuesday August 18, 8 am to 5 pm *

Northern Team: Price County 93,236 acres, both

Southern Team: Eau Claire County 52,530 acres, both

Wednesday August 19, 8 am to 5 pm *

Northern Team: Marathon County 29,767 acres, SFI only

Southern Team: Clark County 132,531 acres, FSC only

Thursday August 20, 8 am to 5 pm *

Northern Team (Ferrucci only): Wood County 37,592 acres, both

Southern Team (Wager, Hanowski, Zimmer): Jackson County 120,886 acres, both

Friday August 21, Audits 7 am-2 pm only *

Northern Team (Ferrucci only): Taylor County 17,000 acres, both

Southern Team (Gary added, Wager not in field, Wager takes Gary's truck): Juneau County 15,186 acres, both Audit Teams travel to Eau Claire

2 pm: End of Field Audits; auditors travel back to Eau Claire, WiDNR staff return home

3 pm: Audit team begins deliberations and scoring

Saturday August 22

Scoring continues

Auditors travel home (except Dave Wager)

Sunday August 23

FSC and SFI Lead Auditors continue deliberations/scoring

Monday August 24, DNR Office, Black River Falls

9 am to 11 am: Exit meetings and presentation of results - Wager with Ferrucci joining by phone

* **Note on daily field schedules:** Each field day will start with a one-hour office meeting to make introductions, hear overviews of the county forest, receive documents, and review the field itinerary

2009 Wisconsin County Forest Audit Plan Provisions

The Wisconsin County Forest Program is seeking independent re-certification that its SFI Program conforms to the requirements of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Standard, 2005-2009 Edition. An audit team assembled by NSF-ISR will make a determination of conformance according to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Audit Procedures and Qualifications (SFI APQ) 2005–2009 Edition. This Audit Plan describes the conduct of the NSF-ISR SFIS Certification Audit conducted to determine conformance.

Additional details about how NSF-ISR’s SFIS Certification Audits are conducted are contained in the NSF-ISR SFIS Certification Process Standard Operating Procedure (4742), which is consistent with the SFI® requirements. Audits for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard® (SFI) are also conducted in accordance with the principles of auditing contained in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 19011:2002 guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing.

SFIS Certification Scope and Objective

The SFIS Certification Audit will apply to the Wisconsin County Forest Program’s SFI Program implementation in 25 participating counties, and other related activities that are covered by the SFI Standard.

The scope statement to appear on the certificate is as follows:

The sustainable forestry activities and land management operations of participating counties within the Wisconsin County Forest System, encompassing approximately 2,188,793 acres of forestland in the following 25 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, and Wood.

Certification Criteria

As specified in the SFI® Standard 2005-2009, the NSF-ISR SFIS Certification Audit objective is to establish whether the Wisconsin County Forest Program’s SFI program is in conformance with the SFIS Objectives, Performance Measures, and Indicators. Several of the SFI requirements 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
- Objective 8 – Procurement Requirements

Determination of conformance to the SFI Standard will be based on the requirements of the 2005-2009 Sustainable Forestry Initiative®. Findings will be based upon the literal language of the SFIS Objectives, Performance Measures and Indicators. The NSF-ISR Audit Team will not add additional requirements that are not specified in the SFI Standard.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Wisconsin DNR's management representative with respect to this SFIS Certification Audit is Jeff Barkley, County Forests Specialist, supported by Paul Pingrey, Forest Certification Coordinator. The NSF-ISR lead auditor will be Mike Ferrucci. The other members of the audit team include Dave Wager, FSC Lead Auditor and Forest Ecologist; Gary Zimmer, Wildlife Biologist; and JoAnn Hanowski, Avian Ecologist. Audit team members fulfill the qualification criteria for conducting SFIS Certification Audits contained in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Audit Procedures and Qualifications (SFI APQ) 2005–2009 Edition.

Audit procedures and auditor qualifications shall be consistent with Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Audit Procedures and Qualifications (SFI APQ) 2005–2009 Edition. Information regarding auditor qualifications is provided in Appendix 2.

Logistics

Paul Pingrey will travel with the Northern Team and will have a state vehicle with space for 2 auditors
Jeff Barkley will travel with the Southern Team and will have a state vehicle with space for 2 or 3 auditors
Gary Zimmer will have his personal vehicle and will be asked to drive it Tuesday night through Saturday
North Team: Start: Holiday Inn Express on north end of Eau Claire

Chippewa – Monday PM (Meet at Chippewa County Courthouse – 711 North Bridge St.)
Overnight in Phillips (2 hrs. / 100 miles)

Price – Tuesday (Meet at Price County Forestry office – 104 South Eyder Ave.)
Overnight in Merrill (1.25 hrs. / 70 miles)

Marathon – Wednesday (1/2 hr. / 20 miles from Merrill) (Meet at Marathon County Forestry & Parks Office – 212 River Dr.) Overnight in Wisconsin Rapids (1 hr. / 50 miles)

Wood – Thursday (Meet at Wood County Courthouse) Overnight in Medford (1.5 hrs. / 70 miles)

Taylor – Friday (Meet at Taylor County Forestry Dept. – 224 South Second St.)
Overnight – Eau Claire; Holiday Inn Express on north end of Eau Claire?

South Team: Start: Holiday Inn Express on north end of Eau Claire

Chippewa – Monday PM (Meet at Chippewa County Courthouse – 711 North Bridge St.)
Overnight – Remain in Eau Claire

Eau Claire – Tuesday (Meet at Eau Claire County Forestry Dept. – 227 First St. West, Altoona)
Overnight – Remain in Eau Claire

Clark – Weds. (Meet at Clark County Forestry & Parks – Courthouse – 517 Court St., Neillsville)
Overnight in Black River Falls (.8 hrs. / 50 miles)

Jackson – Thursday (Meet at Jackson County Forestry Dept. W7970 Airport Rd., Black River Falls)
Overnight – Remain in Black River Falls

Juneau – Friday (Meet at Juneau County Forestry Dept. – 650 Prairie, Mauston)
Overnight – Eau Claire; Holiday Inn Express on north end of Eau Claire?

Possible Attendees Day 1 Overall Discussions:

Quinn Williams, Attorney – phone call Friday August 21

Jim Warren, Section Chief, Tribal Issues –Weds. night in Black River Falls and on the tour in Jackson County on Thursday

Loren Ayers, Research Scientist

Jane Severt, Executive Director, Wisconsin County Forests Association

Other DNR Employees to Interview:

Paul DeLong, Wisconsin State Forester

Randy Hoffman (to be interviewed by Robert Hrubec previous week on State Lands Audit)

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 please tell us about any sales that are being worked at that time, and we would add one or two of these if possible.

Response from WiDNR: From Jeff Barkley: "I have taken the liberty of pulling the initial timber sale list for the County's being audited this year. Attached are all timber sales on the County Forests being audited that were set up, sold, or completed in the last 2 years. Each stand is listed but for every sale the pertinent stands are highlighted alternately in white or gray. Let me know if there is anything additional you would want for these. I'm assuming we will be operating as in the past and you will be forwarding a random sample from these that I can then send to the individual counties for ground-truthing.

I will be working with John Gritt in our office (I believe both of you met John last year). He will be coordinating the logistics for the audit and we will take care of making hotel reservations for you both as in the past... we would like to have a face-to-face closing meeting. It is scheduled in the Black River Falls Area Office (east conference room) for August 24th."

Documentation Requested:

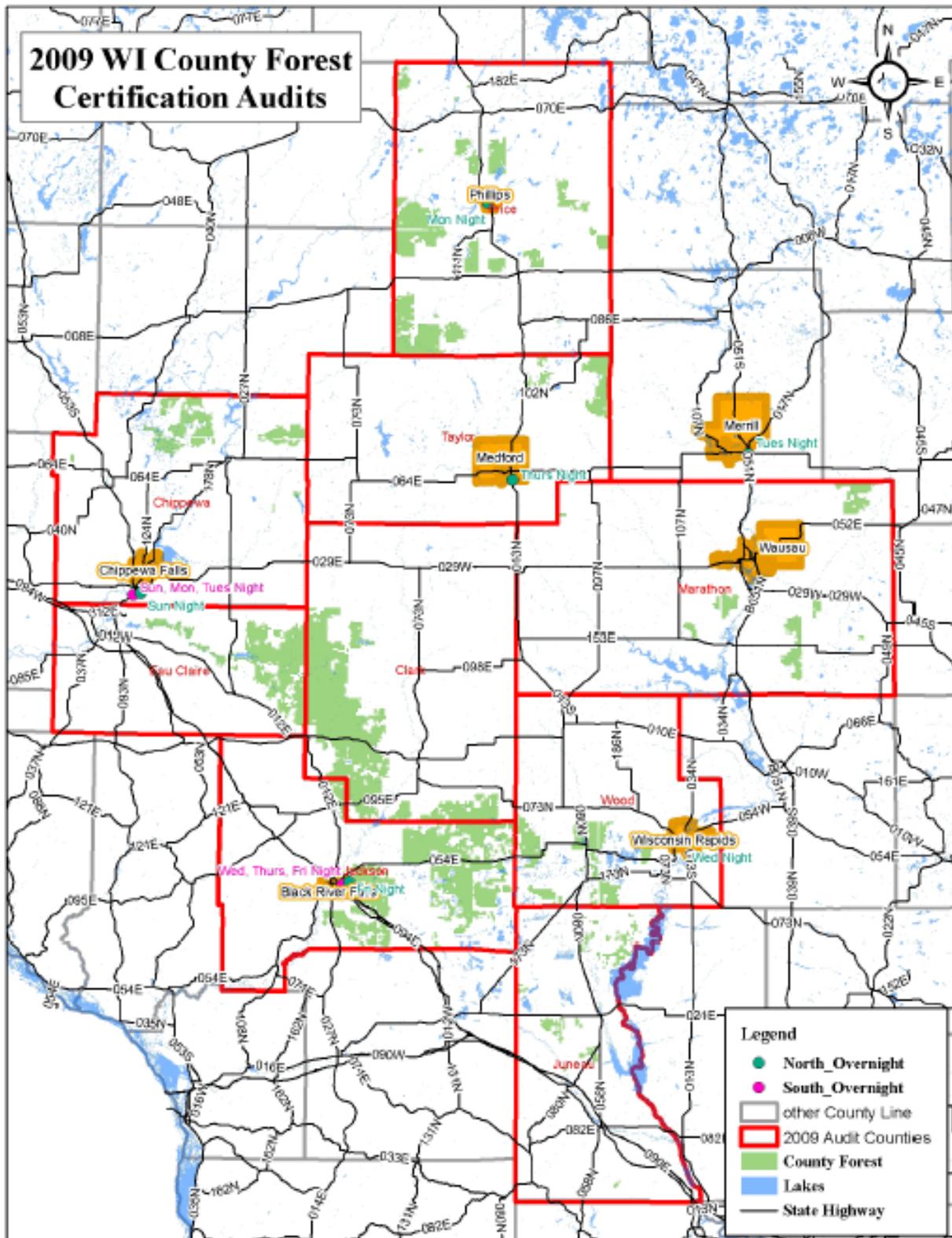
When we arrive each day please provide documentation for the selected sites. We would also need copies of the relevant portions of the management plans (a printed copy borrowed for the day will suffice) and any other information that would help us determine conformance to the certification requirements.

Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

All NSF-ISR auditors will maintain complete and strict confidentiality regarding all aspects of the audit. All NSF audit team members have signed confidentiality agreements that include provisions regarding the avoidance of conflict of interest, including requirements of the SFI Standard. Prior to finalizing the audit team, the auditor and audit team members shall disclose any prior land appraisal or assessment work or land brokerage activity they or their employers conducted related to the property to be audited.

Audit Team Meeting

The NSF-ISR Audit Team will receive introductory materials in advance of the audit, and may have preliminary e-mail and telephone discussions regarding the assignments and logistics. The audit team will meet prior to conducting the audit to review the audit plan and make any final adjustments. This meeting will occur the night before the opening meeting in the team's hotel, and will be continued over breakfast on August 17, 2009 prior to the opening meeting.



Daily Briefings

Each day of the SFIS Certification Audit will begin with a brief opening meeting to document the day's schedule, responsibilities, and arrangements; to obtain any needed documents; and to answer other preliminary questions. Each day will conclude with a short closing meeting to review the day's findings, to confirm plans for the evening, and to plan for activities the following day. Since they are working in separate locations, the two audit teams will confer each evening by phone to discuss observations and potential CARs.

Potential areas of minor or major non-conformance identified during the field audit will be discussed at the daily closing meeting. Additional evidence or field site investigations that could clarify the areas of non-conformance should be identified and prepared for the following day.

Dispute Resolution Process

The NSF Lead Auditor is responsible for making a recommendation for certification. The NSF Certification Review Board member will review the audit report, consider the Lead Auditor's recommendation, and make a final determination regarding certification.

In the event that there is a dispute between the lead auditor and the Wisconsin County Forest Program's representatives over interpretations of the SFI Standard or any other aspect of the certification audit the first step is for the Program Participant's management representative to call the Audit Manager (888-NSF-9000) to resolve the dispute. If the dispute continues, the formal dispute resolution process of NSF-ISR (AE-989-0002) will be followed.

Reporting

Process for Preparation and Review of the Final Report

The lead auditor will prepare a draft report consistent with the format and contents outlined in the NSF-ISR SFIS Certification Process document. The lead auditor shall forward the draft final report to the Wisconsin County Forest Program's representatives for a review of factual accuracy within two weeks of the Closing Meeting. The Wisconsin County Forest Program's representatives will have up to two weeks to submit comments to the lead auditor. The lead auditor will incorporate appropriate suggestions from the Wisconsin County Forest Program's representatives and then forward the Final Report to the NSF-ISR CB reviewer within one week of receipt of comments.

The CB reviewer will review the Final Report for thoroughness and completeness and shall make the final decision regarding certification. Upon approval, the SFI Program Manager will send the Final Report to NSF and will ensure that a copy and certificate are issued to the Wisconsin County Forest Program's representatives within eight weeks of the closing meeting. If additional time is required the SFI Program Manager and/or the Lead Auditor will so notify the Company.

Public Report

A public report must be provided to SFI Inc. for posting on their web site. This public report must be provided to SFI Inc. at least two weeks in advance of any public claims or statements about the results of the SFIS Certification Audit.

The content of the public report will be agreed to by NSF-ISR and the Wisconsin County Forest Program's representatives to ensure that it captures all of the relevant findings. This public report will normally consist of the first section of the SFI Audit Report and shall include the following:

- Description of the audit process, objectives, and scope;
- Description of substitute indicators, if any, used in the audit and a rationale for each;
- Name of Program Participant that was audited, including its SFI representative;
- General description of the Program Participant's forestland and manufacturing operations included in the audit;
- Name of the audit firm and lead auditor (names of the audit team members, including technical experts may be included at the discretion of the audit team and Program Participant);
- Dates the certification was conducted and completed;
- Summary of the findings, including general descriptions of any nonconformances and corrective action plans to address them, opportunities for improvement, and exceptional practices; and
- Certification recommendation.

Final Report

In addition to the core elements of the Public Report described above, the Final Certification Report shall include the following:

- The Audit Plan including audit team personnel;
- Notification letter, including the audit dates; and
- The Audit Matrix and Notes pages.

Timeline for Project (from original proposal):

Completed By:	Task Description:
July	2009 Scheduling Document Request and Review
Early August	2009 On-site Full Certification Assessment
October 2	2009 Delivery of Draft Reports
October 31	2009 Comments from DNR due on Reports
November 30	2009 Delivery of Final Reports and Award of Certification

Revised Timeline for Reporting:

Completed By:	Task Description:
October 2 Sept 2*	2009 Delivery of Draft Reports
October 31 9*	2009 Comments from DNR due on Reports
November 30 Dec 8*	2009 Delivery of Final Reports and Award of Certification

Distribution of Reports

The final and summary reports are the sole property of the Wisconsin County Forest Program. The distribution of the final and summary reports will be at the discretion of the Wisconsin County Forest Program. Consistent with the requirements of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Audit Procedures and Qualifications (SFI APQ) 2005–2009 Edition, the Wisconsin County Forest Program’s representatives should submit a copy of the summary report to SFI Inc.

All working documents, draft and final and summary reports in the possession of the audit team members and lead auditor shall be destroyed at the end of the SFIS Certification Audit process, unless agreed to in writing by NSF-ISR and the Wisconsin County Forest Program. NSF-ISR and the lead auditor shall retain one copy of all documents related to the SFIS Certification in permanent files for purposes of conducting surveillance audits and re-audits, and for other legitimate purposes.

Certificate of Conformance

Upon successful completion of the SFIS Certification Audit process as contained in this Audit Plan, NSF-ISR shall issue a formal certificate of conformance with the SFI Standard. The content of the SFIS Certificate is outlined in the NSF-ISR SFIS Certification Process Standard Operating Procedure.

Surveillance Audit and Re-audit Schedule

The final step in the audit planning process is to tentatively schedule periodic surveillance audits. The periodic surveillance audits will generally be scheduled within twelve months of the initial audit, and will generally occur annually.



Section B
SFI Certification 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; September 2009 Code 9

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, 9				
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, 9				
1.1.2	Documentation of annual harvest trends in relation to the sustainable forest management plan.		7, 8, 9				
1.1.3	A forest inventory system and a method to calculate growth.		7, 8, 9				
1.1.4	Periodic updates of inventory and recalculation of planned harvests.		7, 8, 9				
1.1.5	Documentation of forest practices (e.g., planting, fertilization, and thinning) consistent with assumptions in harvest plans.		7, 8, 9				

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		<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>	
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, 9				
2.1.1	Designation of all management units for either natural or artificial regeneration.		7, 8, 9				
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			9
2.1.3	Minimized plantings of exotic tree species and research documentation that exotic tree species, planted operationally, pose minimal risk.		7, 8, 9				
2.1.4	Protection of desirable or planned advanced natural regeneration during harvest.		7, 8, 9				
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, 9				
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>		9				
2.2.1	Minimized chemical use required to achieve management objectives.		7, 8, 9				
2.2.2	Use of least toxic and narrowest spectrum pesticide narrowest spectrum and least toxic pesticides necessary to achieve management objective.		7, 9				
2.2.3	Use of pesticides registered for the intended use and applied in accordance with the label requirements.		8, 9				
2.2.4	Use of Integrated Pest Management where feasible.		7, 8, 9				
2.2.5	Supervision of forest chemical applications by state-trained or certified applicators.		7, 9				
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 ...		9				

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, 9				
2.3.2	Process to identify soils vulnerable to compaction and use of appropriate methods to avoid excessive soil disturbance.		7, 8, 9				
2.3.3	Use of erosion control measures to minimize the loss of soil and site productivity.		7, 8, 9				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			9	7, 8
2.3.5	Retention of vigorous trees during partial harvesting, consistent with silvicultural norms for the area.		7, 8, 9				
2.3.6	Criteria that address harvesting and site preparation to protect soil productivity.		7, 8, 9				
2.3.7	Minimized road construction to meet management objectives efficiently.		7, 8, 9				
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	9			
2.4.1	Program to protect forests from damaging agents.		7, 8	9			
2.4.2	Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to minimize susceptibility to damaging agents.		7	8, 9			
2.4.3	Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control programs.		7, 8	9			
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, 9				
2.5.1	Program for appropriate research, testing, evaluation and deployment of genetically improved planting stock including trees derived through biotechnology.		7, 9				

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

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>	
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, 9				
3.1.1	Program to implement state or provincial equivalent BMPs during all phases of management activities.		7, 8, 9				8
3.1.2	Contract provisions that specify BMP compliance.		7		9		
3.1.3	Plans that address wet weather events (e.g., inventory systems, wet weather tracts, defining acceptable operational conditions, etc.).		7, 9				
3.1.4	Monitoring of overall BMP implementation.		7, 8, 9				9
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, 9				
3.2.1	Program addressing management and protection of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones.		7, 9				
3.2.2	Mapping of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones, and where appropriate, identification on the ground.		7, 9				
3.2.3	Implementation of plans to manage or protect streams, lakes and other water bodies.		7, 8, 9				
3.2.4	Identification and protection of nonforested wetlands, including bogs, fens, vernal pools and marshes of significant size.		7, 9				
3.2.5	Where regulations or BMPs do not currently exist to protect riparian areas, use of experts to identify appropriate protection measures.						9

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		<u>Audit</u> <u>-or</u>	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				<u>OFI</u>
			<u>C</u>	<u>EXR</u>	<u>Maj</u>	<u>Min</u>	
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				9 (2)
4.1.2	Program to protect threatened and endangered species.		7, 8, 9				
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, 9	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		9	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, 9	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, 9				
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, 9				
4.1.8	Program to incorporate the role of prescribed or natural fire where appropriate.		9				
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, 9				
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, 9				

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			<u>C</u>	<u>EXR</u>	<u>Maj</u>	<u>Min</u>	
4.2.2	A methodology to incorporate research results and field applications of biodiversity and ecosystem research into forest management decisions.		8, 9				

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

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			<u>C</u>	<u>EXR</u>	<u>Maj</u>	<u>Min</u>	
5.1	<i>Program Participants shall manage the impact of harvesting on visual quality.</i>		9				
5.1.1	Program to address visual quality management.		7, 8, 9				
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, 9				
5.2	<i>Program Participants shall manage the size, shape, and placement of clearcut harvests.</i>		7, 9				
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	9			
5.2.2	Documentation through internal records of clearcut size and the process for calculating average size.		9				
5.3	<i>Program Participants shall adopt a green-up requirement or alternative methods that provide for visual quality.</i>		9				
5.3.1	Program implementing the green-up requirement or alternative methods.		9				
5.3.2	Harvest area tracking system to demonstrate compliance with the green-up requirement or alternative methods.		9				
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, 9				

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		<u>Audit</u> <u>-or</u>	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				<u>OFI</u>
			<u>C</u>	<u>EXR</u>	<u>Maj</u>	<u>Min</u>	
6.1.	<i>Program Participants shall identify special sites and manage them in a manner appropriate for their unique features.</i>		7, 8, 9				
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, 9				
6.1.2	Appropriate mapping, cataloging, and management of identified special sites.		7, 8, 9				

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

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>	
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, 9				
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, 9				

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>OFI</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				
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				
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				
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.		9				

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		<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>	
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, 9				
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, 9				
10.1.2	Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving SFI Standard objectives.		7, 9				
10.1.3	Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.		7, 8, 9				9
10.1.4	Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.		7, 8, 9				
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, 9				
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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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, 9				

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

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>	
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>		9				
11.1.1	Access to relevant laws and regulations in appropriate locations.		7, 9				
11.1.2	System to achieve compliance with applicable federal, provincial, state, or local laws and regulations.		9				
11.1.3	Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through available regulatory action information.		7, 9				
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, 9				
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>		9				
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.		9				

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		<u>Audit</u> <u>-or</u>	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				<u>OFI</u>
			<u>C</u>	<u>EXR</u>	<u>Maj</u>	<u>Min</u>	
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, 9				
12.1.2	Support for the development and distribution of educational materials, including information packets for use with forest landowners.		9				
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.		9				
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).		9				
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, 9				
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, 9				
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, 9				
12.2.3	Recreation opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.			7, 8, 9			

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>	
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, 9			
12.3.1	Involvement in public land planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public.			7, 8, 9			
12.3.2	Appropriate contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal, or independent collaboration.			7, 9			
12.4	<i>Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall confer with affected indigenous peoples.</i>		7, 9				
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, 9				
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>		9				
12.5.1	Support for SFI Implementation Committee efforts (toll-free numbers and other efforts) to address concerns about apparent nonconforming practices.		7, 9				
12.5.2	Process to receive and respond to public inquiries.		7, 9				
12.6	<i>Program Participants shall report annually to the SFI Program on their compliance with the SFI Standard.</i>		7, 9				
12.6.1*	Prompt response to the SFI annual progress report. (*Note: This indicator will be reviewed in all audits.)		7, 8, 9				
12.6.2	Recordkeeping for all the categories of information needed for SFI annual progress reports.		7, 9				
12.6.3	Maintenance of copies of past reports to document progress and improvements to demonstrate conformance to the SFI Standard		7, 9				

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>	
13.1*	<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> (*This Performance Measure will be reviewed in all audits.)		7, 8, 9				
13.1.1	System to review commitments, programs, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.		7, 8, 9				9
13.1.2	System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving SFI Standard objectives and performance measures.		7, 8, 9				
13.1.3	Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve SFI conformance.		7, 8, 9				

2009 Auditor Notes

Requirement	Auditor	Notes
1.1	C MF	<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 MF	<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 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"> • All counties enrolled in the program updated their 15-year county forest management plans in December 2006, with final approvals during 2006 or early in 2007. The plans cover 2006-2020 and were based on a template developed by DNR and County Forest staff. The template was revised (from the previous version used for the 1996-2005 plans) and expanded to cover additional issues, including those that relate to both SFI and FSC certification requirements for planning. • A review of the plans for the 7 SFI counties visited this audit confirmed that all of the required SFI elements were included. • Plans are updated annually to add: (1) Approved amendments; (2) Annual Accomplishment report; and (3) Current annual work plan and budget.
1.1.2	C MF	<p>“Documentation of annual harvest trends in relation to the sustainable forest management plan.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006: 0.41 net growth 0.31 removals cord equivalents per acre on county forests • 1996: 0.36 net growth 0.23 removals cord equivalents per acre on county forests • “The County Forests could sustainably harvest approximately 61,000 acres annually. Recon inventory indicates a need to examine approximately 75,000 acres for harvest annually. This includes a backlog, most notably on northern hardwood, aspen and scrub oak types. Historically, upon examination, 14,000 of the acres prove to be not ready for harvest as yet. These forest stands may not have grown as quickly as anticipated or the original stand data may have been erroneous. Of the remaining 61,000 acres, a certain percentage are not harvested because they are in areas unsuitable / unfeasible for harvest (e.g. natural areas, river buffers, difficult logging chance) or foresters cannot ensure regeneration of the type (e.g. cedar). Approximately 12,000 acres on the County Forests are withheld from harvest for such reasons. These are local management decisions. Of the remaining 49,000 acres scheduled for harvest annually, the County Forests are cutting 43,400. The shortfall is due primarily to insufficient staff to set up and administer the timber sales.” Source: Environmental Assessment • Marathon County: 15-year average allowable “harvest” (actually the acres that should be examined) is 543 acres, but due to the need to balance the age-class structure they would like to cut about 150 acres/ year of aspen early (before the 40-to 42 year target rotation age). The short-term target is to assess about 800 acres and to actually harvest up to 650 acres per year; past 4 years have been harvesting an average of 670 acres per year. • Jackson, Juneau, Eau Claire, Price, Wood, and Taylor Counties are harvesting fewer acres than the allowable harvest target. All counties justify cases when harvests exceed growth, generally to rectify harvest backlogs or to balance age-class distribution.
1.1.3	C MF	<p>“A forest inventory system and a method to calculate growth.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed the inventory system and growth calculations by review of draft 15-Year County Forest Plans, by discussions with foresters, and review of some recon tables. • Foresters inventory a portion of each county forest annually using the RECON

		<p>system. FIA data provide broad growth determinations (see previous indicator).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowable cut determinations based on area control are included in management plans, providing a good analysis, description of methods, and strategic approaches to deal with age class imbalances. Annual tactical planning refines these harvest level determinations.
1.1.4	C MF	<p>“Periodic updates of inventory and recalculation of planned harvests.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harvest on the County Forests has been stable over a number of years at approximately 76% of net forest growth, according to data in the Environmental Assessment (EA). Marathon County inventoried about 50% of forest in the past 5 years but 29% is more than 15 years old, most of this older recon is young aspen which doesn’t need to be inventoried until it is closer to harvest age. Taylor County inventory is up-to-date; most stands not inventoried within the past 15 years are inoperable or are young aspen.
1.1.5	C MF	<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 (EA) confirmed that records are kept of silvicultural practices. Interviews, field observations, EA data, and review of county forest plans confirmed that plan assumptions regarding allowable harvests are conservative, and that needed cultural practices are implemented.
2.1	C MF	<p><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></p>
2.1.1	C MF	<p>“Designation of all management units for either natural or artificial regeneration.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Silviculture Handbook describes regeneration options for all stand types; in some cases planting is one option. Where there is an option the sale narrative and prescription describes the planned approach.
2.1.2	OFI MF	<p>“Clear Requirements to judge adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct understocked areas and achieve desired species composition and stocking rates for both artificial and natural regeneration.”</p> <p><u>OFI There is an opportunity to assess the system for tracking regeneration in stands managed under selection silviculture (group selection and individual tree selection).</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The requirements for adequate regeneration are found in the Silvicultural Handbook. Foresters are knowledgeable about regeneration treatments and requirements, and conduct informal and formal regeneration surveys for all even-aged regeneration treatments. Foresters consistently track even-aged regeneration treatments and follow-up to determine success. WisFIRS is used to flag stands that may require follow-up treatments. Juneau County had two sales 407 and 425 where regeneration in even-aged stands was challenging, yet the system for tracking regeneration (RECON coding for a regeneration check at year 5) was not being used. Most stands managed under selection methods are currently even-aged and are being gradually converted to uneven-aged structure. Most current selection-system harvest entries are not being designed to aggressively seek to establish and release regeneration, and gaps have been smaller and less frequent than recommended in the Silviculture Handbook. Harvests that do include “gaps” to release existing regeneration or to encourage additional regeneration are often easy to assess for regeneration status; but systems to document the regeneration are more informal and less timely (RECON done some years later) than they could be. Most of the counties selected for review in the 2009 audit do not generally have the

		soil types conducive to northern hardwoods, the primary type where uneven-aged management is applied. This issue should be revisited during the next audit.
2.1.3	C MF	<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 exotic species are planted.
2.1.4	C MF	<p>“Protection of desirable or planned advanced natural regeneration during harvest.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field observations showed careful logging practices, and the few overstory removal treatments observed met this indicator easily. Several treatments were reviewed where desirable advance regeneration was present and was protected during the harvest; most were even-aged or two-aged systems. Most counties selected for review in the 2009 audit do not have the soil types conducive to northern hardwoods, the primary type where uneven-aged management is applied and where protection of advanced regeneration is needed and more challenging. This issue should be revisited during the next audit.
2.1.5	C MF	<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"> Forest type conversions through planting are conducted on a limited acreage each year. When done they are based on a review of soil and habitat types (to confirm appropriate soils and likely success) and long-term management plans. The goal is generally to increase the amount of a forest type that is lacking in a region when compared to natural or pre-settlement conditions. Habitat or other ecological benefits generally drive such decisions.
2.2	C MF, DW	<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 MF, DW	<p>“Minimized chemical use required to achieve management objectives.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most counties visited during this audit either use no chemicals or use them on only a small portion (or none) of their lands each year. Wood and Taylor Counties currently use none; Chippewa and Price use very little, and Marathon uses more in their Red Pine program. Chemical use is generally a last resort employed only after other possible methods have been tried or are known to be ineffective.
2.2.2	C MF, DW	<p>“Use of least toxic and narrowest spectrum pesticides necessary to achieve management objective.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of least toxic and narrowest spectrum pesticides necessary to achieve management objective is at the heart of the silvicultural guidelines and practices. The most toxic and potentially dangerous pesticides are not used, per FSC requirements, which helps demonstrate SFI conformance as well.
2.2.3	C MF, DW	<p>“Use of pesticides registered for the intended use and applied in accordance with the label requirements.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel interviewed who use pesticides are trained (State Certified) and confirmed the primary tool for conformance is to read and follow the label instructions.
2.2.4	C MF, DW	<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> Forest management on forests visited is strongly focused on maintaining healthy, vigorous stands through stocking control and use of moderately short rotations. Stands are regularly assessed formally (RECON) and informally for presence of insects or diseases, and treatments are applied in a timely manner before outbreaks

		<p>widen. The initial treatment approach is commonly salvage or sanitation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest management efforts focus on maintaining healthy stand conditions so as to minimize the need for chemical treatments; stands visited were generally healthy.
2.2.5	C MF, DW	<p>“Supervision of forest chemical applications by state-trained or certified applicators.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel interviewed who use pesticides are state certified.
2.2.6	C MF, DW	<p>“Use of best management practices appropriate to the situation; for example ...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed through interviews; no chemical application was observed during the audit.
2.3	C MF	<p><i>“Program Participants shall implement management practices to protect and maintain forest and soil productivity.”</i></p>
2.3.1	C MF	<p>“Use of soils maps where available.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil maps are contained in the GIS and are used in planning timber sales and other treatments.
2.3.2	C MF	<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 use soil and topographic maps, habitat type classifications, and/or field reviews as appropriate to identify soils vulnerable to compaction and use a variety of methods to avoid excessive soil disturbance, including designation of harvesting only with frozen ground or very dry conditions for all or a portion of a harvest area.
2.3.3	C All	<p>“Use of erosion control measures to minimize the loss of soil and site productivity.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of erosion control measures including sale planning and layout, time-of-year and equipment limitations, and BMPs were found in all projects reviewed, with any exceptions noted elsewhere in the report.
2.3.4	Minor All	<p>“Post-harvest conditions conducive to maintaining site productivity (e.g., limited rutting, retained down woody debris, minimized skid trails).”</p> <p><u>Minor Non-conformance SFI-2009-03: Two harvests in Jackson County had significant rutting; these harvests were in wet areas where initial sale conditions called for logging during frozen conditions.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field observations confirmed limited rutting, minimized skid trails, and limited soil disturbance at most 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. Coarse woody debris is a concern in some aspen harvests. 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). Biomass Harvesting Guidelines (BHG) for appropriate levels of removal/retention have been approved (Dec. 2008) and are being rolled out (summer/fall 2009). These establish limits to removal of wood fiber so as to maintain soil productivity, consistent with existing scientific knowledge. Provisions have been made for research to expand the science and cover gaps in knowledge.
2.3.5	C MF	<p>“Retention of vigorous trees during partial harvesting, consistent with silvicultural norms for the area.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field observations confirmed the retention of vigorous trees and the appropriate application of silviculture guidelines for removal of least vigorous and poorest quality trees and retention of the trees best adapted to the site. Foresters consistently emphasized the retention of the most vigorous trees when marking stands; results of partial harvests were very good.
2.3.6	C MF	<p>“Criteria that address harvesting and site preparation to protect soil productivity.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wisconsin State BMPs for Water Quality and policies provide these criteria. Confirmed that “excessive rutting” definitions are in all recent timber sale contracts.
2.3.7	C MF, DW	<p>“Minimized road construction to meet management objectives efficiently.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chippewa County: 33,000 acres, 21.44 miles of County Forest Roads with the designation “Certified” meaning they are permanent, primary forest roads. There are

		<p>also permanent secondary roads and temporary roads.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Price, Wood and Marathon Counties have superbly constructed and well-maintained roads spaced sufficiently apart to be construed as “minimized”. Roads in Wood and Chippewa County are also minimized in construction; some roads in Chippewa have such minimal construction (surfacing) that there are issues with BMPs. Some secondary roads in Wood County were wet and had standing water on some sections; these were protected by locked gates.
2.4	EXR MF	<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 long-term forest health, productivity and economic viability.”</i> <u>Management efforts and results in terms of forest health are exceptional.</u></p>
2.4.1	EXR MF	<p>“Program to protect forests from damaging agents.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each counties’ forest management plan has a section on protection: “600 Protection: Objective: To protect and manage the resources of the forest from preventable losses resulting from fire, insects, diseases and other destructive elements including those caused by people. Protective methods shall include proper silvicultural methods.” WCFA has been working in support of WDNR in the face of hunter opposition to progressive deer management; “Earn-A-Buck” has been successful in lowering deer numbers but has been temporarily suspended. Herd control (increased doe removal by supplying extra antlerless tags) is still available as a deer management tool.
2.4.2	EXR MF	<p>“Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to minimize susceptibility to damaging agents.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each county’s forest management plan has a section (610) on “Control of Forest Pest & Pathogen” with general information on those found in the county and basics of control including IPM approaches. Section 810.1.5 also covers the basics of Integrated Pest Management. All foresters interviewed knew the primary pests of the forest types under their management and the silvicultural methods needed to maintain vigorous stands as well as needed treatments when pests appear. Confirmed timely and effective oak wilt treatments. Rotations in most cases are set short enough to prevent many pest problems (for example Jack Pine rotations of 50 years).
2.4.3	C MF	<p>“Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control programs.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each county’s forest management plan has a section (605) on Fire Control.
2.5	C MF	<p><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></p>
2.5.1	C MF	<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"> Confirmed the state’s tree improvement program is designed and managed by properly trained specialists. The program ranges from wild collected seed to first and second (one and a half) generation seed orchards. Records are kept of seed sources and out planting.
3.1	C	<p>“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.”</p>
3.1.1	C ALL	<p>“Program to implement state or provincial equivalent BMPs during all phases of management activities.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foresters and loggers are trained; foresters layout and inspect all jobs. Field inspections of numerous completed or ongoing timber harvests confirmed that BMPs are integrated into the program and applied consistently, with the exception of road BMPs.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most county forest road systems observed were in good condition (no road-related erosion issues were found on SFI Counties); some secondary roads in Wood County were wet and slightly rutted but not eroding. • See ATV discussion under Indicator 3.1.4 below. • Roads and ATV/OHV trails should be sampled during the 2010 audit to determine whether maintenance meets BMP requirements for having adequate road surface material, road profiles being crowned or sloped, and ditched as needed.
3.1.2	Major	<p>“Contract provisions that specify BMP compliance.”</p> <p><u>Major Non-conformance SFI 2009-02: Contracts in Wood County, Juneau County, and in Jackson County do not have provisions that specify BMP conformance.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts except those in Jackson, and Juneau Wood County have contract provisions that specify BMP compliance.
3.1.3	C MF	<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"> • Confirmed by interviews with foresters and review of records that timber harvest planning considers weather events, with some sites on dry sands intended for the wet time of year, other sites identified for only dry weather, and other sites only for frozen ground.
3.1.4	OFI ALL	<p>“Monitoring of overall BMP implementation.”</p> <p><u>OFI: There is an opportunity to improve monitoring of impacts to soil and water resources from ATV use.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMP monitoring is part of regular harvest inspections and all timber sale closeout inspections. These inspections are focused on the harvest area and roads appurtenant to the sale. • An emerging issue involves OHVs: <i>“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. 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 ... 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.”</i> Source: Environmental Analysis And Decision On The Need For An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) • The complete systems of roads and recreational trails are not formally monitored for BMP compliance; Managers may not have sufficient information to make good decisions on trail/road closures or maintenance needs. • Roads and ATV/OHV trails should be sampled during the 2010 audit to determine whether maintenance meets BMP requirements for having adequate road surface material, road profiles being crowned or sloped, and ditched as needed.
3.2	C ALL	<p><i>“Program Participant shall have or develop, implement, and document, riparian protection measures based on soil type, terrain, vegetation and other applicable factors.”</i></p>
3.2.1	C MF	<p>“Program addressing management and protection of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed that this program continues to operate effectively by reviews of completed and partially completed timber harvests and road and trail improvement efforts. • Water quality considerations including lakes or rivers potentially affected by the

		<p>harvest are documented for each proposed harvest on a Form 2460-001 "Timber Sale Notice and Cutting Report" and this information is reflected in the harvesting requirements within the timber sale contracts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sale and/or harvest unit boundaries are designed to avoid or buffer wetlands, stream, lakes, and other water bodies. Riparian buffers associated with harvests are shown on maps and marked on the ground.
3.2.2	C MF	<p>"Mapping of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones, and where appropriate, identification on the ground."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed these are mapped, and that they are marked on the ground as appropriate.
3.2.3	C ALL	<p>"Implementation of plans to manage or protect streams, lakes and other water bodies."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed by field observations that wetlands and riparian zones are protected.
3.2.4	C ALL	<p>"Identification and protection of nonforested wetlands, including bogs, fens, vernal pools and marshes of significant size."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonforested wetlands are protected by excluding them from sales where possible, and by buffering them using special colors of paint to indicate "no harvest" or "no equipment". Very small nonforested wetlands are generally protected; loggers try to avoid these, and foresters work to communicate their locations, but some are entered on occasion. Most sites with significant areas of included wetlands (forested and/or nonforested) are designated for winter harvest only.
3.2.5	OFI MF	<p>"Where regulations or BMPs do not currently exist to protect riparian areas, use of experts to identify appropriate protection measures." <u>There is an opportunity to improve by developing BMPs for vernal pools.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wisconsin has BMPs covering riparian areas and many forestry practices. However, there are no formal BMP for Vernal Pools and isolated pocket wetlands.
4.1	C JH, GZ	<p><i>"Program participants shall have programs to promote biological diversity at stand- and landscape- scales."</i> Management Plan Section 530 High Conservation Value Forests/Areas (HCVF) and Exceptional Resources list such areas; Management implications associated with these designations are included in Section 850 of each plan.</p>
4.1.1	OFI JH, GZ	<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>OFI 2009: 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>OFI 2009: There is an opportunity to incorporate the information provided in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan and related tools to protect and maintain biodiversity.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Forest management plans and project narratives included an overview of species and natural communities present on each individual forest. The State Natural Areas program is in place on the county forests with many examples of designated areas approved and supported by the appropriate County Boards. With a few exceptions, county forest staff had limited training and knowledge to identify TES species and uncommon natural communities that they may encounter in the field. Wildlife Action Plan is variable and more direction is needed for its implementation on the County Forests.
4.1.2	C JH, GZ	<p>"Program to protect threatened and endangered species."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NHI data base, while still with some backlogged data, is regularly being used

		<p>before the commencement of all on the ground activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence was obtained that wildlife managers or other specialists are being utilized to provide input during project planning on county forest to reduce or eliminate impacts on ETS species.
4.1.3	C JH, GZ	<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"> Karner Blue Butterfly (KBB) Habitat Conservation Plan in place and implementation occurring on known county locations. Counties working closely with DNR wildlife managers and species specialists on reducing/minimizing impacts to woodland raptors (e.g. northern goshawk and red-shouldered hawk). Some Counties are partnering with Citizens Monitoring Groups to survey a variety of fauna and flora (e.g., BIOBLITZ).
4.1.4	Major JH, GZ	<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>Elevated to Major CAR SFI-2009-1: The Wisconsin County Forest Program has developed but has not implemented criteria for stand level habitat retention elements. Staff are unclear regarding how to implement some aspects of the revised requirements.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even-aged harvests vary greatly between counties and individual sites in the amount of retention of stand-level habitat elements. Some harvest units observed had little or no visible retention, despite being part of the SFI standard for over 4 years. Criteria have been developed (see 2008 CAR response and see “Tree Marking” Chapter 24 in the Silviculture Handbook revised March 2009), but have not, with few exceptions, been implemented. The guidance provided in Chapter 24 is unclear to local managers and training is needed to improve compliance and to reach desired objectives.
4.1.5	C GZ, JH	<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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Wisconsin’s Wildlife Action Plan (2005-2015) - Priority Conservation Actions & Conservation Opportunity Areas -Central Sand Plains Ecological Landscape: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Maintain lowland shrub communities like alder thicket and shrub-carr, and manage the surrounding working forest to benefit Golden-winged Warblers by leaving scattered off-site aspen, ash and tamarack in shrub-dominated areas and managing the adjacent upland forest in a shifting mosaic of patch sizes and age classes to provide continuous habitat.</i> <i>Restore oak barrens on sites that will increase effective habitat patch size for area sensitive species, such as upland areas between large wetlands.</i> <i>Manage oaks as a large-scale mosaic of patches along a successional gradient that includes oak forest, oak woodland, oak opening, and open wetland.</i> <i>Maintain or restore mixed pine-oak forests to represent the full natural range of variability in patch sizes and age classes.</i> <i>Identify and restore oak/conifer barrens and shrub-dominated habitats through the application of prescribed fire and timber management.</i> <i>Work with private land owners to promote the creation of smaller savanna restorations that provide habitat for Red-headed Woodpeckers.”</i> “Wildlife Action Plan /Species of Greatest Conservation Need/ Implementation Plan” is designed to prevent the need to raise the status of species to the ETS status. The plan will help to prioritize money and efforts to identify the best places to

		<p>conserve individual species or habitats. Information is available on the internet site and can be searched by property (by county forest) or by species. The WAP contains species profiles and overviews of natural communities, but does NOT contain operational-level information NOR stand-level detail, being broader and more strategic. Overlap of SGCN, ecological landscapes, and native community habitats leads to the identification of Conservation Opportunity Area (COA) approach. COAs are identified for all county forests, and counties are implementing approaches to support COAs through prescriptions or annual work plan amendments; regional ecologists will help roll out COA actions to the counties</p>
4.1.6	C GZ, JH	<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"> • While opportunities may be somewhat limited, some examples were observed of existing old-growth forests (Gerstberger Pines in Taylor County) and management to move towards old-growth forests (extended rotation of Skunk Woods in Wood County) as well as the passive management direction on “z” coded stands in Price and other counties. • Older forest inclusions (e.g. hemlock/white pine/yellow birch) on the Price and Taylor County Forests were retained during adjacent management activities. • The effort to recently acquire the Gerstberger Pines tract on the Taylor County Forest and continue with a passive management approach is exemplary • Eau Claire County has a limited number and acreage of “wilderness” areas.
4.1.7	C JH, GZ	<p>“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.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FISTA training session on Forestry Invasive BMPs (harvesting track) • Also there is a recreation track for Invasive BMPs not yet approved • Wood County is surveying, and has found some buckthorn but not much else. • Wood County admin and liaison are planning to attend the December 3, 2009 training for BHG and Invasive Species. • Marathon County is, thus far, fortunate in not having significant invasive plant issues; some reed-canary grass and garlic mustard, try to treat it as it is encountered; have treated these and spotted knapweed, tansy, oak wilt, black locust, • Jackson, Eau Claire and Juneau have few invasive species and do little or no pesticide applications. • Biological agents being used for invasive species control in Marathon County Forests.
4.1.8	C GZ, JH	<p>“Program to incorporate the role of prescribed or natural fire where appropriate.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of prescribed fire is quite limited on county forests due to a lack of trained staff. Prescribed fire has been used to some level in barrens work in Eau Claire and Jackson Counties. • Marathon County is, thus far, fortunate in not having significant invasive plant issues; some reed-canary grass and Garlic Mustard, try to treat it as it is encountered; have treated these and spotted knapweed, tansy, Oak wilt, black locust,
4.2	C GZ, JH	<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 GZ, JH	<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"> • A variety of programs are available to assist with the management of imperiled species and communities on the county forests including NHI data, the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan and the Conservation Opportunity Areas. • Wisconsin DNR wildlife managers, BER staff and species experts are available to county forest managers to provide important management support.
4.2.2	C GZ, JH	<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"> • Research results and expertise on red-shouldered hawk nesting was provided by ornithologist Gene Jacobs to the Wood County Forest during project implementation. • The Kotar Habitat Classification System was being utilized by managers on most county forests. • Research results have driven monitoring and management programs for the Karner Blue Butterfly.
5.1	C MF	“Program Participants shall manage the impact of harvesting on visual quality.”
5.1.1	C MF	<p>“Program to address visual quality management.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the management plans include Section 520 “Aesthetic Management Zones”. • Confirmed by field observations and discussions with foresters.
5.1.2	C MF	<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"> • Harvests in visible areas, particularly near recreation facilities (campgrounds, trails) were carefully designed to minimize visual impacts. Harvests in those locations have good utilization, visual buffers, and care is taken to minimize impacts on alternative activities. • Most contracts include multiple requirements for slash scattering and/or disposal; some of these provisions are for fire –related reasons, but most also help manage aesthetic impacts.
5.2	C C	“Program Participants shall manage the size, shape, and placement of clearcut harvests.”
5.2.1	EXR MF	<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> <p><u>The program exceeds the standard for minimizing clearcut size.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average clearcut size is 23.7 acres. Most clearcuts are less than 40 acres in size; one older clearcut larger than 150 acres was observed, a few others large clearcuts were noted. Some of these larger clearcuts were associated with pest problems (two-lined chestnut borer, oak wilt).
5.2.2	C MF	<p>“Documentation through internal records of clearcut size and the process for calculating average size.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Barkley: SFI annual report from Paul Pingrey
5.3	C MF	“Program Participants shall adopt a green-up requirement or alternative methods that provide for visual quality.”
5.3.1	C MF	<p>“Program implementing the green-up requirement or alternative methods.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS, WisFIRS, RECON and forester-planned timber harvests ensure that green-up requirements are met.
5.3.2	C MF	<p>“Harvest area tracking system to demonstrate compliance with the green-up requirement or alternative methods.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS, WisFIRS, RECON provide the tracking system.
5.3.3	C ALL	<p>“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.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed by extensive field sites (selected sales) as well as by observations while

		traveling from site to site.
6.1.	C JH, GZ	<i>“Program Participants shall identify special sites and manage them in a manner appropriate for their unique features.”</i>
6.1.1	C JH, GZ	<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"> • Randy Hoffman, BER has worked with most counties enrolled in SFI. • NHI database is checked during planning for all timber sales and significant projects. • Price County has designated the 220 acre Jump River Woods as a State Natural Area and two other sites as High Conservation Value Forest. • Wood County has worked with Jay Toth, Ho-Chunk Tribe to conduct field surveys in cases where there was some concern or possibility of impacts to tribal artifacts; no artifacts were found and the proposed activity was modified.
6.1.2	C JH, GZ	<p>“Appropriate mapping, cataloging, and management of identified special sites.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood County has established several State Natural Areas: including Red Oak Bottoms *, Owl Creek Fen Savanna (900 acres), Hiles Wetlands, and Skunk Creek Woods Proposed State Natural Area *. * Sites are productive forestland being managed on longer rotation to test “ecological forestry” approach. The plan lists other special sites including bluff sites, red-shouldered hawk management location... • Taylor County Plan: “530.1.1 Relic Old Growth Stands: The Gerstberger Pines Area is a 20 acre parcel in the Township of Rib Lake. This area is considered to be a relic old growth stand and was acquired for its unique features. It has been set aside as a special use area. An educational trail and associated parking lot has been developed to explain unique aspects of the area... It is the policy of Taylor County to manage these resources (locally significant sites) to enhance and protect their individual exceptional features. The State Historical Society maintains a database of identified areas. This database will be consulted as a part of timber sale establishment.” • County foresters designate smaller areas with unique or special vegetation types in the RECON inventory with a “Z” code, indicating that there will be no harvest. These sites are essentially “deferred” until such time as an assessment can be made and a planned approach can be developed. Marathon County, for example, has 24 such stands ranging from 1 to 58 acres.
7.1	C MF, DW	<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>
7.1.1	C MF, DW	<p>“Program or monitoring system to ensure efficient utilization, which may include...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biomass Harvesting Guidelines adopted December 2008; implementation plan approved by Wisconsin Natural Resources Board March, 2009 • Training this week -5 sessions in various parts of the state • Considerable parts of the state have soil types with prohibitions on whole-tree harvesting, with exceptions for site preparation, control of invasive exotic species, fuel reduction, barrens restoration, prescribed fire, and for Jack Pine on droughty sites where rotations are 40 years or longer • Monitoring at the timber-sale level is done by the sale administrator (forester); Monitoring overall (state level) still being worked out
9.1	C MF	<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 MF	<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"> • U. Wisconsin research on survey efforts for Golden-winged warbler; • Wood County Forest is available for and has been used for bobcat research; wolf research; black bear research; whooping crane research • Bayfield County 2 pilot deer exclosures; Vilas is applying for money to do so • Focus of current research funding by the WDNR is on Biomass harvesting and effects on soil and site productivity. A list of existing monitoring / research efforts for whole tree harvesting impacts*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Role of Fine-Woody Detritus in Biogeochemical Cycling and Ecosystem Sustainability Following Whole-tree Harvesting on Sandy, Nutrient-Poor Soils in Wisconsin</i> - Bockheim, etal. • <i>An environmental assessment of forest biomass harvesting in Wisconsin</i> - Karl Martin, Van Deelen, MacFarland • <i>Impacts of biomass Removal on Carbon and Nutrient Recycling in Wisconsin Northern Hardwood Forests</i> – David Mladenoff • <i>Impacts of Harvesting Forest Residues for Bioenergy on Nutrient Cycling & Community Assemblages in Northern Hardwood Forests</i> – Deahn M. Donner, etal (USFS – WI.) • <i>Identifying trade-offs between biomass production and biological diversity in Wisconsin’s forests and grasslands to meet tomorrow’s bioenergy and biofuel demands</i> - Chris Webster, David Flaspohler, and Amber Roth (Michigan Tech.) • <i>Impacts of woody biomass harvesting on saproxylic communities, nutrient availability, and productivity in aspen ecosystems</i> - D’Amato, etal (Minnesota) • Biomass monitoring plan evaluated and decision made to incorporate biomass harvesting guidelines and tracking of biomass sales into existing timber sale framework on public and MFL timber sales. Still investigating development of an integrated monitoring system for biomass guidelines and possibly incorporating with BMPs for water quality. Also contemplating the feasibility of collecting data on fine woody debris as part of the Wisconsin State Forest CFI. <p>*Some sites on the above-listed studies are on County Forests</p>
9.2	C MF	<p><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></p>
9.2.1	C MF	<p>“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.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed awareness and limited use of the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan – 2005 in Price, Marathon, Wood, Eau Claire, and Taylor Counties. http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/WWAP analyzed the status of 556 native vertebrate species and identified 84 birds, 30 fish, 24 reptiles & amphibians, 14 mammals and 530 invertebrates as SGCN. In addition, it identified the habitats they are associated with (Natural communities), where they occur in Wisconsin (ecological landscapes) and the priorities for management (conservation actions and areas) • This information has not been particularly useful as yet.
10.1	C ALL	<p><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></p>
10.1.1	C MF	<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"> • Commitment to certification is found in Section 325 of each county’s forest management plan. Confirmed for Price, Marathon,

10.1.2	C	<p>“Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving SFI Standard objectives.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conformed a good understanding of SFI certification and several types of SFI-related information including newsletters, SFI updates, attachments, word documents; often weekly. • Follow-up emails that are customized to particular regions or forests are consistently provided. • The amount of information ramps up prior to the field audits.
10.1.3	OFI ALL	<p>“Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.”</p> <p>OFI: <u>There is an opportunity to improve training on the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan and associated information.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Records kept by all folks interviewed. Methods include keeping CEU certificates (both the individual and their supervisor). • All field staff have had training in water quality BMPs • Biomass Harvesting Guidelines adopted December 2008; implementation plan approved by Wisconsin Natural Resources Board March, 2009 - Training kicks off this week (5 sessions in various parts of the state) • Confirmed publicity for training sessions for both new guidelines “Biomass Harvesting Guidelines (BMGs) & Timber Sales - Forestry BMPs for Invasive Species” on these dates during 2009: 8-19, 9-22, 9-23, 11-10, and 12-03. • The 8-19-09 training session included 45 minutes on Chapter 24 Marking Guidelines. • Interviews with foresters and biologists about Silviculture Handbook Chapter 24 indicated confusion, questions, etc. Field training sessions are being considered; all foresters and biologists are aware of the new guidelines, but most have questions about their implementation.
10.1.4	C MF, DW	<p>“Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed logger training requirements are in all timber sale contracts. • Logger training certificates or training status are checked/confirmed for each logging contractor on county forest harvest sites. Foresters communicate with FISTA to check on the status of contractors by name. Wood County keeps a separate file of SFI training certificates, organized by “current” and “outdated”. • Contractors who conduct pesticide application must be Wisconsin Certified Pesticide Applicators
10.2	C MF	<p><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></p>
10.2.1 12.1.1, 12.2.1, and 12.5.1	C MF	<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"> • Jane Severt is on the Wisconsin SIC and attends all of the meetings • Paul Pingrey is on the Wisconsin SIC, and attends all of the meetings or finds a replacement from the Forestry Division (Bob Mather) • SIC has seen revenue declines. WiDNR provided \$60,000 in support during 2008.
11.1	C	<p><i>“Program Participants shall take appropriate steps to comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws and regulations.”</i></p>
11.1.1	C	<p>“Access to relevant laws and regulations in appropriate locations.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County ordinances are listed in Section 330 with full text found in Section 900 of each county’s forest management plan.

11.1.2	C	<p>“System to achieve compliance with applicable federal, provincial, state, or local laws and regulations.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counties must pay a 10% tax on timber revenues to the towns from which the timber is cut and a 20% severance tax to the state paid if the county has an outstanding loan balance with the State; timber revenues are carefully tracked and payments made annually. A rotating system of audits is in place and functioning to check all counties financial records, including these payments, every three years.
11.1.3	C MF	<p>“Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through available regulatory action information.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No evidence was found of compliance issues on county forests (staff interviews, stakeholder discussions, web search)
11.1.4	C MF	<p>“Adherence to all applicable federal, state, & provincial regulations and international protocols for research & deployment of trees derived from improved planting stock & biotechnology.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA
11.2	C DW	<p><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></p>
11.2.1	C DW	<p>“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.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each county has such policies in place; confirmed by review of bulletin boards in selected counties.
12.1	C MF, GZ	<p><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></p>
12.1.1	C MF	<p>“Support for efforts of SFI Implementation Committees.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 10.2.1 above
12.1.2	C MF, GZ	<p>“Support for the development and distribution of educational materials, including information packets for use with forest landowners.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood County participated in a “Log a Load for Kids” harvest, which is a fund-raiser and educational program; documented in the December 2008 issue of “Great Lakes TPA” magazine. Taylor County foresters work with local groups and have helped develop the Gersterber Pines Nature Trail. Confirmed by interviews that DNR provides representatives to SIC; also confirmed participation by the Executive Director for WCFA
12.1.3	C MF, GZ	<p>“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.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This requirement is met by the Wisconsin DNR through its extension and private forestry programs. WCFA Executive Director is on the Wisconsin SIC.
12.1.4	C MF, GZ	<p>“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).”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> County forests continue to buy land to expand or block in their forests. Wisconsin DNR supports the listed programs and activities.
12.1.5	MF,	<p>“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</p>

	GZ, JH	efforts in planning where practical and consistent with management objectives.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Indicator 9.2.1 above (Wildlife Action Plan and Conservation Opportunity Areas).
12.2	C MF, GZ	<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	C MF, GZ	“Support for the SFI Implementation Committee program to address outreach, education, and technical assistance (e.g., toll-free numbers, public sector technical assistance programs).” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 10.2.1 above.
12.2.2	C MF, GZ	“Periodic educational opportunities promoting sustainable forestry, such as ...” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood County participated in a “Log a Load for Kids” harvest, which is a fund-raiser and educational program; documented in the December 2008 issue of “Great Lakes TPA” magazine. Wood County’s forester has provided input into the summer programs for children and interpretive trail development in the Dexter County Park.
12.2.3	EXR MF, GZ	“Recreation opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.” <u>2009: EXR - The Wisconsin County Forests provide an exemplary array of recreation opportunities; forest management is implemented so as to enhance these.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> County forests are managed and used for varied recreation uses; facilities and programs are first-rate. Marathon County: ATV trails on Burma Road tract only; 11 miles existing trail, 3 miles had been closed due to inappropriate soils and original layout Price County Forest Management Plan contains maps of recreation sites, including “Intensive Recreation Areas (3 Campgrounds, Picnic Areas, Swimming Areas, Boat Landings, Waysides, and Shooting Areas) Managed Trail Areas, and Recreation Opportunities for People with Disabilities”. There are also 6 parks, 411 miles of snowmobile trail and 11 miles of ATV trails. The ATV trails have been constructed in the last two years to a high standard (rock base, crushed rock surface, drainage culverts, and a significant wooden bridge spanning 800 feet of wetlands/stream. The plan includes management direction for all of these areas as appropriate. ATV use on the Price County Forest is restricted to existing logging roads and county forest roads, which are “open unless posted closed”; there are 19 miles of designated roads. Wood County has gated or blocked (bermed, boulders) some roads to prevent or minimize unauthorized use, particularly by big trucks. Also has one ATV use area (visited). Each 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 plans include management direction for all of these areas as appropriate. Management Plan Section 510.5 lists “Intensive Recreation Areas” for each county’s plan.
12.3	EXR MF, GZ, DW	<i>“Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall participate in the development of public land planning and management processes.”</i> <u>The county forests provide a model for citizen participation, through the county forest committees.</u>
12.3.1	EXR MF, DW	“Involvement in public land planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> County and State land planning and management activities are closely coordinated through the use of the DNR 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

		<p>meetings that extensive public opportunities for comment were employed during the recent effort to update all county plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County forests are run by the citizens; Public members can comment during any monthly county forestry committee meeting. • Examples: Marathon County has a permanent, 11-member “County Forest Citizen Advisory Committee” that meets quarterly; they helped write the 15-year County Forest Management Plan; Wood County’s forester often meets with individual citizens. • Not all of the plans are available on the internet.
12.3.2	EXR C MF, DW	<p>“Appropriate contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal, or independent collaboration.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers work closely with citizens and various organizations.
12.4	C MF, DW	<p><i>“Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall confer with affected indigenous peoples.”</i></p>
12.4.1	C MF, DW	<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"> • 525 Treaty Rights: Gathering Miscellaneous Forest Products: Price, Marathon, and Taylor County Forest Management Plans. • Attempts to involve the tribes occur in all counties with ceded lands and associated rights. • Some counties in areas with no formal tribal rights (outside the ceded lands) are reaching out to the tribes.
12.5	C MF	<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	C MF	<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"> • See 10.2.1 above.
12.5.2	C MF, DW	<p>“Process to receive and respond to public inquiries.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County foresters and forest administrators are available to the public by phone, email, or office visit. • County Forestry Committees and County Boards are an excellent mechanism for public involvement. Any citizen of the county can ask to be put onto a forestry committee agenda for any issue, and can petition their county board representative to raise the issue with the full county board.
12.6	C MF	<p><i>“Program Participants shall report annually to the SFI Program on their compliance with the SFI Standard.”</i></p>
12.6.1*	C MF	<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. Also reviewed 2008 report.
12.6.2	C MF	<p>“Recordkeeping for all the categories of information needed for SFI annual progress reports.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WisFIRS tracks most of the information.
12.6.3	C MF	<p>“Maintenance of copies of past reports to document progress and improvements to demonstrate conformance to the SFI Standard.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed that older copies are maintained. Requested and immediately received by email the 2008 report.

13.1*	C MF	<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>
13.1.1	OFI MF	<p><i>“System to review commitments, programs, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.”</i></p> <p><u>There is an opportunity to improve the system of ensuring that SFI requirements are fully implemented by all involved counties (Liaison Foresters in all counties) to ensure that it is consistently applied.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By law and agreement DNR is responsible for reviewing the county forestry programs to ensure compliance and effectiveness. A DNR Liaison Forester is assigned to each county and must complete a minimum number of hours of oversight and direct assistance. These foresters are the front line staff for assisting county forestry departments to achieve certification. • Regular communication between the County staff and local DNR Liaison & Team Leader evaluate effectiveness of programs and projects, including timber sales, vegetation management, and the range of forest management activities. • From 2007 Marathon County Financial Audit Report: “Internal Review of SFI Programs <i>Marathon County annually meets with DNR and other partners to discuss various issues affecting the County Forest, including certification. Also, the Forest Administrator is a member of the Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) Legislative/Forest Certification committee. This committee develops policies and offers solutions to the group members in dealing with the corrective action requests and opportunities for improvements required for maintaining SFI or FSC certifications. In addition, the periodic DNR audits afford an opportunity to discuss SFI programs. No improvements or problems were noted regarding the issues of meeting certification requirements.”</i>
13.1.2	C MF	<p><i>“System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving SFI Standard objectives and performance measures.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed management plan requirements pertaining to annual reporting are followed; these are listed here: 3100 ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORTS A copy of an annual accomplishment report shall be prepared and provided to members of the County Board and to official copyholders of this Plan for inclusion into this chapter. This report shall include, at a minimum, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Timber sale accomplishments including gross and net sale receipts and harvest goals achieved. ○ Timber stand improvement accomplishments. ○ Recreation development and maintenance accomplishments including recreation revenues and expenses. ○ Wildlife management accomplishments including revenues and expenses. ○ Fisheries management accomplishments including revenues and expenses. ○ Other accomplishments identified as “needs” in Chapter 1000. • 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.
13.1.3	C MF	<p><i>“Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve SFI conformance.”</i></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.

Field Sites

Tuesday August 18, 8 am to 5 pm *

Northern Team: Price County 93,236 acres, both

Field Tour– Mike Ferrucci and Gary Zimmer, Auditors

- Site 1: Holy Cross Ruffed Grouse Management Area – Timber sold but not harvested, planned aspen clearcut, seed tree harvest in tamarack, and swamp hardwood selection harvest.
- Site 2: Access road into Site 1 – Road is gated and only used as a hunter walking access. Surface is fully vegetated (grassy) and has proper drainage including culverts at one small stream crossing with twin culverts which will need replacing soon.
- Site 3: Solberg Lake County Park – Pine stands have been thinning two times and are due soon; campground and day use area; not ADA compliant but other areas are
- Site 4: Georgetown ATV Trail and Bridge – Significant investment in new ATV trail built with sub-base, running surface, cross-drains, bridges as needed. Impressive bridge and causeway over stream and wetlands.
- Site 5: East Georgetown Stub Road – Newer all-season road that is ditched, crowned, surfaced with crushed rock to meet BMPs.
- Site 6: Informal reserve at end of East Georgetown Stub Road – Hemlock-Pine stand and wetland/vernal pool reserved from harvest but not yet formally designated as a HCVF.

Field Tour– Mike Ferrucci, Auditor

- Site 7: Active Harvest Tract 15-07 – Stand improvement thinning visible from roads and ATV trail. Some incidental gaps, some release of oak. Logger interview confirmed FISTA training and good awareness of BMPs and site protection measures designed into the harvest.
- Site 8: Tract 14-07 – Competed regeneration harvest originally set up in 2003 but not cut until winter 2008-09. Discussion of wildlife retention guidelines; snags and some live trees retained.
- Site 9: Steve Creek Waterfowl Flowage – Managed by DNR for wild rice and for waterfowl habitat.
- Site 10: Tract 2-07 – Completed 138 acres selection in northern hardwoods and 17 acres in swamp hardwoods. Canopy gaps observed were all smaller than thirty feet diameter, but were ‘cleaned’. Regeneration abundant including red oak and much sugar maple. Deer populations in this area are very close to goal.
- Site 11: Sculpture Park – Cultural landmark managed by Price County Forestry Department, although not enrolled in the county lands program.

Field Tour– Gary Zimmer, Auditor

Site 12: Tract 3-04, Aspen Regeneration Cut, Sale Closed October 17, 2007

- Aspen regeneration approximately 10 feet tall, well stocked. All oak, conifer and thorn apple reserved. Only a few reserve trees visible, some blow down of conifers has occurred according to forester. Discussed need to tally and record residual reserve trees, possibly in sale completion report for monitoring and future audits. Viewed recent road closure that has been controversial to some users. Reason for closure is to protect wet road surface.
- Site 13: 1989 Spruce Plantation along Green Creek Firelane, Area scraped and planted to spruce after poor regeneration occurred. Spruce has been released at least twice including by prison crews. Good growth but not fully stocked with pockets of dense alder present. Original

planting was intended to improve aesthetics by increasing conifers in predominant aspen area.

Site14: Tract 12-08, Large, 151 acre aspen regeneration harvest has been marked and sold but not harvested. Area has low stocking level, approx. 50 basal area, with high shrub component. Few reserve trees, narrative highlights harvest of all aspen to promote better regeneration. Discussed potential conflicts with new retention guides and possibility of reserving small pockets of aspen to better meet guides.

Small, 10 acre, hardwood selection harvest of inclusion within aspen area. Current basal area 120 with after harvest target of 80 – 85 basal area. Emphasis on marking of basswood poles and sawlogs noted.

Site15: Tamarack/black spruce regeneration harvest. Strip cut around 2000. Good stocking throughout stand of tamarack and black spruce seedlings. Remaining strips to be harvested in near future with black spruce seedlings already visible in understory. Question if some tamarack seed trees are needed to be retained in remaining strips to seed in last strips to be cut.

Southern Team: Eau Claire County 52,530 acres, SFI and FSC

Field Tour– Dave Wager and JoAnn Hanowski, Auditors

Site 1: Tower Ridge Recreation Area. High use recreation area close to Eau Claire; Ski trails, disc golf, horse back- very little management; fee area- with chalet

Site 2: Timber Sale 28-06. 34-acre thinning and regeneration adjacent to rifle club shooting range; clearcut red pine- scarify, seed jack pine; goal of mixed oak jack pine site.

Site 3: Timber Sale 20-08- similar stand to 28-06, snags pushed over with dozer for safety consideration

Site 5: Timber Sale 1561. Harvest of mature jack pine, oak and aspen. Aesthetic buffer left along the roadside.

Site 6: Timber Sale 1601. White pine with access through private land; cut heavy so don't need to return for some time; most stands had 50-60 ba retention; excellent protection of red shouldered hawk nest; wetland area had seasonal restriction. Well done.

Site 7: Timber Sale 1533. 33-acre oak jack pine clearcut; steep slope retained trees kept operator out; small amount of fuel wood harvest (though site not overly clean)

Site 8: Timber Sale 1590. 15-acre clearcut of oak. Objective to regenerate oak. Scarify and bull doze maple; No retention- question on how future sites would meet new guidelines for wildlife tree retention.

Site 9: Canoe Landing State Natural Area; Barren/prairie was budworm salvage harvested and tried unsuccessfully to plant red pine. Decided to make it an SNA and barren/prairies; monitor for KBB and small mammals.

Site 11: Tract 5-08; 58-acre oak and mixed hardwood regeneration. Seed tree patches and wetland buffered out of sale. Logger interview John Nelson.

Site 12: Barrens Area SNA- Coon Fork. Excellent work on maintaining enhancing barrens.

Wednesday August 19, 8 am to 5 pm *

Northern Team: Marathon County 29,767 acres, SFI only

Nine Mile Block

- Site 1: Tree Monkey Sale - Completed harvest (78 acres) with three prescriptions: White pine thinning, Aspen thinning, Aspen Clearcut with reserves. Aspen thinning for aesthetics, snow management, gradual conversion to uneven-aged hardwoods.
- Site 2: Recreation trails, Nine Mile Block – extensive trail system for XC skiing, mountain biking, horse riding; superb inclusion of recreation and active forest management
- Site 2B: Oak wilt treatment – use of girdling and herbicides to Site oak wilt patch
- Site 3: Red Pine Plantation Regeneration – difficult stand for control of competing vegetation; various herbicide treatments attempted.
- Site 4: American Transmission Company Powerline – County resisted but had to allow powerline; some mitigation money that will be used to buy additional land.

Kronenwetter Block

- Site 5: Patchwork Octopus Completed Timbersale – 22 acres of thinned maple stand placed within a 50 acre aspen clearcut; thinned stand helps aesthetics; additional retention in cc areas including oak in patch and dispersed and a peninsula of maple stand to remain.
- Site 6: Teton Sale – harvest completed this week (did not visit); contract included all required elements.
- Site 7: Fire Danger Oak Sale – Largest portion oak thinning, with areas of clearcut or overstory removal to release oak regeneration.
- Site 8: Kronenwetter Road Reconstruction – ¾ mile road upgrade to 4-season, with 2 wetland crossings; road maintenance is very good, road use is limited.
- Site 9: Ringle Du Hat Sale – (did not visit); contract included all required elements.

Hewitt-Harrison Block

- Site 10: Animals Everywhere Sale – 54 acres in 14 patches of Aspen cc with retention; 17 acres thinned red maple, 4 acres spruce thinning, nearby waterfowl production areas.
- Site 11: Bitze Boardwalk Nature Trail and Waterfowl Management Area – refuge area with 5 impoundments, interpretive nature trail being updated and renovated, including repairs to water control structure and some dredging to allow water management for waterfowl production
- Site 12: Grassland management and prairie restoration area in cooperation with Pheasants Forever; starting to see uncommon grassland birds.

Thursday August 20, 8 am to 5 pm *

Northern Team: Wood County 37,592 acres, both

- Site #1 – Wood County ATV Area, Seneca Unit of Wood County Forest
600 Acre ATV Area that includes 12 miles of Designated ATV Trail. Only ATV use area on Wood County Forest. Location chosen due to its sandy soils with few wetlands. Much of forested area is red pine plantations that are being managed. Large parking lot present with restroom facilities. Heavily used area by ATV's with some illegal off trail use. Little effective law enforcement efforts occurring to prevent illegal activities. Some policing being done by local ATV club, county has no funding or staff to do enforcement. Most of management left to local club that is able to use state ATV registration funds for maintenance.

- Site #2 – Sale 621, Sale is combination of red pine thinning (8 acres) and aspen/oak regeneration harvest (21 acres). Red pine is being thinned for the third time with emphasis to release developing white pine. Regeneration harvest resulted in heavy regeneration of aspen with some sapling white pine and scattered oak and white pine seedlings evident. Deer browsing is limited and wildlife manager Wayne Hall reports current deer populations at goal levels (25 deer/square mile) after years above goal. Note: No BMP statement in sale contract!
- Site #3 – Sale 641, 10 acre Partial overstory removal harvest of large declining red and white oak. Harvested by hand crew in December, 2008. Left some poor quality, high wildlife potential trees as potential seed sources and to promote potential cavities, snags and downed woody debris. Good mixed regeneration of oak/maple and some aspen clones. Liaison forester is monitoring stand yearly. Decking area was developed off road to minimize conflict with adjacent snowmobile trail.
- Site #4 – Sale 633, Selection harvest of 55 acres in red pine, oak and bottomland hardwoods. Site included newly found red shouldered hawk nest. Hawk expert Gene Jacobs along with DNR wildlife manager Wayne Hall brought in for recommendations. No cut zone established around nest site and harvest restrictions put in place during breeding, nesting and fledging period. RMZ established on both sides of Yellow River and forester worked with Ho Chunk archeologist on location of potential Native American settlement.
- Site #5 – Sale 584, Unit B close to Park Road. Aspen regeneration harvest with conifer reserves. High level of retention observed including oak and red/white pine. Unit was 26 acres but entire sale was 59 acres. A buffer strip was established adjacent to Park Road. Aspen, oak, cherry and white pine seedlings observed in good numbers.
- Site #6 – Sale 628, Regeneration harvest of black and white oak. White pine was left along county highway X, in Aesthetic Zone B. Some mature oaks were marked for retention. Harvest released sapling white pine. Aspen and red maple were designated for harvest and oaks marked. A rubber mat was used to cross a wetland to the west of this unit to assist with harvest of an additional unit. Mat was pulled out after harvest completion and no impact to wetland occurred. Berm was put in place after the harvest to reduce motorized vehicle use.
- Site #7 – Sale 590, Southern Unit, Large white pine 50% shelterwood harvest designed to release white pine and oak regeneration. West boundary of stand is along Hiles Wetlands State Natural Area. Limited residual damage occurred on saplings during harvest.
- Site #8 – Hiles Wetlands State Natural Area, large sedge meadow with water control structure on road/dike. Part of complex that includes Skunk Creek Woods SNA and Lyman Marsh.
- Site #9 – Skunk Creek Woods State Natural Area, part of complex that includes Hiles Wetlands SNA and Lyman Marsh. Management plan calls for extended rotation of white pine in this area.

Site #10 – Sale 590, Northern Unit, Oak Shelterwood, Heavy shrub and sapling regeneration that currently favors maple over oak. Regeneration survey has been done by liaison forester. Overstory scheduled for removal but mature oaks are showing more mortality than expected.

Southern Team: Jackson County 120,886 acres, both

Field Tour: Auditor JoAnn Hanowski

Site #1: Timber Sale 11-08: Active sale, oak clearcut. Water quality BMP's were addressed including a stream crossing and an RMZ. Retention was left in the form of islands around pocket wetlands. Little or no snag or green tree retention on other parts of the sale area.

Site #2: Timber Sale 2098. Thinning of 60 year old red pine stand. Row thinning except in area where there was pocket decline. Some oak is regenerating in the plantation rows. Discussed habitat types that occur in Jackson County. They are not recorded on the form.

Site #3: Timber Sale 1999. Clearcut of "overmature" oak/aspens. Very little green tree retention in the sale area. Left a retention island around one wet area.

Site #4: Timber Sale 2111. Clearcut of mature oak stand with some islands of retention.

Site #5: Planting site. Site was planted twice, once to red pine that did not do very well. The second planting was of jack pine and has had better rates of survival than the red pine.

Site #6 Timber Sale 2169. Interviewed skidder operator. Had a first aid kit, but not a spill kit. The harvest description in this site called for retention of all snags, but no greens were left in the sale area.

Site #7 Timber Sale 1994. Aspen clearcut was set to be done on frozen soils. Logger was given approval to enter stand under dry soil conditions. Rain occurred and significant rutting was done to the main skid trail. The logger was asked to fix the trail. A few green trees and snags were left in the sale area.

Field Tour: Auditor Dave Wager

Site #8: Bauer Brockway Barrens- State Natural Area. Burning every 8 years. Undertaking invasive control for spotted knapweed

Site 9: Lake Wazee Recreation Areas- Open Pit Mine Restoration. County maintains infrastructure at this popular recreation site.

Site 10: Timber Sale 2071- Road improvement project- culverts installed; road gated; 36- acre regeneration harvest of aspen and red maple.

Site 11: Timber Sale 2136 and Adjacent Stand: Salvage operation due to 2-lined chestnut borer; numerous snags left; approx 1% of area in island retention

Site 12: Timber Sale 2174: 64-acre oak salvage from 2-lined chestnut borer mortality; Areas of sale without borer mortality were retained.

Site 13: Timber Sale 2157: 33-acre regeneration harvest. Excellent oak regeneration with a diversity of oak species origination from both stumps and acorns.

Site 14: Timber Sale 2114: 74-acre sale, predominantly pine and spruce thinning with 9-acres of Jack Pine regeneration. Observed two areas of 2114 with excessive rutting. Sale was designated as winter harvest only, but was cut in September.

Site 15: Knutes Forest Road- Oak thinning/shelterwood sale marked but not cut. Den and cavity trees left.

Site 16: Jack pine seeding following an arson fire. Seeded 2007. Very good regeneration.

Friday August 21, Audits 7 am-2 pm only *

Northern Team (Ferrucci only): Taylor County 17,000 acres, both

Site 1: Gerstberger Pines, 20 acre unique tract acquired with forestry funds in 2006 that is a 180 – 200 year old forest of large white pine, red oak, Eastern hemlock, basswood and yellow birch. Tract includes a hiking trail with benches to encourage public use of the site and a parking lot/trailhead adjacent to the tract. No management has been prescribed for this stand.

Site 2: Sale 561, Tract 3-06, Unit was a 59 acre harvest to promote aspen regeneration. Harvest unit includes a small spruce plantation that was thinned through and a black spruce/tamarack wetland that was worked around. Snags were retained as well as a few long lived conifers and oak.

Site 3: Sale 566, Tract 5-05. Unit was a 44 acre white spruce plantation that was planted in 1966 on the site of a former farmstead. Harvest was the second thinning of the stand. No sign of disease problem in remnant white spruce.

Site 4a: Sale 588, Tract 8-08 - 15 acre selection northern hardwood harvest and 100 acre aspen regeneration harvest. Aspen harvest included RMZ protections along stream along west side of stand and red lined buffers around vernal ponds.

Site 4b: Trout Avenue Count Forest Road: Superb road – crowned, surfaced with crushed gravel, ditched.

Site 5: Sale 586, Tract 6-08 - Harvest was two step shelterwood with target to regenerate paper birch. Overstory removed early due to decline. Tree length skidding required by operator to prepare site for birch seeding. Regenerated paper birch, maple, ash, oak, and aspen.

Site 6a: Sale 577, Tract 7-07 - Pocket big tooth aspen regeneration harvest with retention of red oak. Designated ATV Trail goes thru sale, logging ahead warning signs visible on trail. Trail maintained by local club and state ATV funds.

- Site 6b: Sale 577, Tract 7-07 - Active selection harvest in northern hardwoods, trees being felled with processor by a trained logger. Canopy gaps are smaller and less frequent than handbook.
- Site 7: Sale off Bear Avenue. Small stream crossing used to access selection harvest unit. Access restricted to one site and brush used to bridge wetland. Brush removed after sale completion. No visible impact from logging operation to soils but recent ATV use left rut in wetland.
- Site 8: Bear Avenue Hemlock Patch. 8 – 10 acre mixed hemlock/white pine/yellow birch stand with vernal pools. Some regeneration of hemlock scattered on area. Stand not “z” d out of Recon. Light harvest on edges to remove competitive maple and aspen. Other team viewed other small hemlock and/or conifer patches held in reserve.
- Site 9: Camp 8 Campground, Picnic Area, and Boat Launch
- Site 10: Loop Road – Various older treatments; road is well-maintained and meets BMP requirements for roads, including surface, crown, ditches, and cross-drains as needed.
- Site 11: Horse Camp – Former gravel pit developed for camping and used extensively by horse riders to access Taylor County’s horse trails.
- Site 12: Ice Age Trail – Trail visually buffered from surrounding harvests. ATV are bypassing gate and using trail despite signs and regulations.

Southern Team: Juneau County 15,186 acres, both

- Site 1: Bass Hollow Recreation Area. Salvage harvest of blow down in HCVF area- but was consistent with goals to maintain the unit as late successional hardwoods. Salvage was restricted to what could be reached from the road.
- Site 2: Timber Sale 425. Mix of red pine plantation thinnings and oak/jack pine regeneration blocks with oak wilt. Regeneration of one small jack pine site left to natural seed in, but there was no scheduled follow-up to monitor success.
- Site 3: Timber Sale 407. Regeneration of bottomland hardwood/oak stand with stump sprouts. Boundaries well marked, winter logging, stream protected with buffer and crossing. Regeneration spotty in some areas.
- Site 4. 10th Rd 150-acre Aspen clearcut with minimal retention. Harvested in winter of 2006.
- Site 5. Timber Sale 436. 55-acre red pine thinning. Oaks retained for diversity and wildlife. Some salvage pockets provided diversity of structure.
- Site 6. Kennedy Park. 240-acre older forest area. Managed for recreation and late successional habitat.

Attendees:

Opening Meeting

Northern team: Mike Ferrucci, Gary Zimmer, Auditors; Paul Pingrey, DNR Certification Coordinator
% Southern Team: Dave Wager, JoAnn Hanowski, Auditors; Jeff Barkley, DNR County Forest Program Administrator
Jane Severt, Executive Director, Wisconsin County Forests Association

Tuesday August 18

Eau Claire County %

John Staszczuk, County Forest Admin
Brooke Ludwig, DNR Liaison
Mike Torud, Parks and Forest Supervisor
Jody Gindt, County Forester
Paul Lokken, Eau Claire Parks and Forestry Committee
John Dunn, DNR Wildlife Supervisor
Paul Westegaard, Area Forest Staff Specialist
Randy Schott, Area Forestry Leader- Black River Falls
Loren Ayers, DNR Endangered Resources
Steve Edge, DNR Forestry Team Leader

Price County #:

Pete Bartelt, Price County Forest Admin
Kyle Schmidt, DNR County Forest Liaison
Pat Beringer, DNR Wildlife Manager
Eric Holm, Assistant County Forest Administrator
Corey Verdegan, Price County Forester
Mike Luedeke, DNR Northern Regional Forester
Tom Duke, DNR Northern Region Staff Specialist
Greg Mitchell, DNR Forestry Team Leader
Steve Lorenz, Price County Project Forester

Wednesday August 19

Marathon County #:

Tom Lovlien, Marathon Co Forest Admin
Chad Keranen, DNR County Forest Liaison
Cortney Schaefer, DNR Wildlife Manager
Elroy Zemke , Chair Forestry and Recreation County Board, President of WCFA Bd. of Directors
Doug Brown, Assistant County Forest Administrator
Shirley Bargander, DNR Forestry Team Leader

Thursday August 20

Jackson County %

James Zahasky, Cty. Forest Admin
Russell Kind, DNR County Forest Liaison
Michelle Windsor, DNR Wildlife Manager
Dave Spaude, Jackson County Forester
Randy Schott, Area Forestry Leader- Black River Falls
Paul Westegaard – DNR Area Forestry Staff
Gary Schluter – DNR Team Leader
Jane Severt – WCFA Executive Director
Jim Warren – DNR Lands Section Chief - Madison

Wood County #:

Fritz Schubert, Wood County Forest Admin
Steven Grant, DNR Cty Forest Liaison
Wayne Hall, DNR Wildlife Manager
Steve Courtney - DNR Area Forestry Leader, Wisconsin Rapids
Chad Schooley - Wood County Parks Administrator
Mike Warnke - DNR Team Leader
Bruce Henderson - Babcock Ranger

Friday August 21

Juneau County%

Brian Loyd, County Forest Admin
Jon Robaidek, DNR Wildlife Manager
Monty Brink, Assistant County Forest Administrator
Mike Warnke, DNR Forestry Team Leader, Juneau
Doug King, Juneau Cty. Forestry Technician
Steve Courtney – DNR Area Forestry Leader

Taylor County #:

Brad Ruesch, Taylor County Forest Admin
Russ Aszmann, Taylor County Forest Assistant Admin
Scott Lindow, DNR County Forest Liaison
Greg Mitchell, DNR Forestry Team Leader
Mike Luedeke, DNR Northern Region Forester
Mark Schmidt, DNR Wildlife Manager
Tom Duke, Northern Region Forestry Specialist
Mark Berglund, Star News
Larry Glodoski, DNR Area Forestry Supervisor

Closing Meeting Notes

SFI Scope:

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.

Process:

SFI CARs will be provided by email August 24
 60 days to provide corrective action plans – due October 9, 2009
 120 days (total) to close Major CARs – due December 8, 2009
 Draft SFI Report will be provided by September 2 (one month early)
 DNR comments including CAR plans by October 9 (three weeks early)
 Final Report and award of certification: after Major CARs closed, no later than December 15.

From Proposal:

Completed By:	Task Description:
July	2009 Scheduling Document Request and Review
Early August	2009 On-site Full Certification Assessment
October 2 Sept 2*	2009 Delivery of Draft Reports
October 31 9*	2009 Comments from DNR due on Reports
November 30 Dec 8*	2009 Delivery of Final Reports and Award of Certification

* adjusted to match CAR deadlines shown above

2010 Audit: tentative August 11 to 13.



Section C
NSF-ISR Corrective Action Request (CAR) forms

2008 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 Minor

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:
Confirmed **some** aspects of the corrective and preventive action plans by review of the following documents: Silviculture Handbook – Chapter 24 (Tree Marking & Retention Guidelines) which has been revised; Agenda: 2008 Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) Spring Administrators Conference ; Draft – Timber Sale Notice & Cutting Report narrative (WDNR Form 2460-001); and summary statement of SFI-2008-01 Action. The counties need to improve results on this portion of the corrective plan: “Communicate changes to field. Monitor effectiveness through Timber Sale narratives and sale approval process”.

STATUS: Elevated to a Major CAR. AUDITOR/DATE: Mike Ferrucci, August 21, 2009

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

Marking & Tree retention training as a part of our Biomass Training sessions

- Completed 4 of 5 sessions (Woodruff, Green Bay, Fitchburg, Minong) with Neillsville scheduled for 12/3. Including those scheduled to appear in Neillsville - 365 DNR and County staff received the training.
- Documentation - Sample agendas from biomass session with tree retention portions highlighted

Identification of local staff to coordinate Area field sessions - Oct. 2009

- Completed - 22 people have been identified as Area tree retention contacts
- Documentation - List of Trainers

Train-the-Trainer session for Area contacts identified above

- Completed 11/17/09
- Documentation - Agenda & List of attendees

2009 Corrective and Preventive Action Request (CAR)

Company/Location: <u>Wisconsin DNR County Forest System</u>	Date: <u>August 21, 2009</u> FRS # <u>1Y943</u>
Auditor: <u>Mike Ferrucci</u>	CAR Number: <u>SFI-2009-02</u>
Location of Finding: <u>Wood and Jackson Counties</u>	Previous CAR Number/Date: <u>None</u>
Discussed with: <u>Jeff Barkley, Paul Pingrey</u>	Nonconformance Type (underline): <u>Major</u> Minor
AUDITOR FINDING: Standard Number and Clause: <u>2005-2009 Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard® Indicator 3.1.2: "Contract provisions that specify BMP compliance."</u>	
Description: <u>Minor Non-conformance: Contracts in Wood County and in Jackson County do not have provisions that specify BMP conformance.</u>	
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. <u>BMPs for Water Quality have been ingrained into public land forestry in Wisconsin for several years. References to BMP for Water Quality compliance is included in all County Forest Plans (typically in Chapter 500). Operationally, all County Forests have been implementing the BMPs on timber sales however some Counties did not include the requirement specifically in their timber sale contract. (In some cases it was referenced on the timber sale map or prospectus).</u>	
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. 1. <u>A review of the timber sale contracts in all County Forest Plans will be completed by WDNR Central Office to ascertain whether there are additional counties that do not have BMP compliance referenced specifically in their County Forest timber sale contract. – October 2009</u> 2. <u>Contact will be made with individual County Forests to amend their contracts to include mandatory BMP provisions – October / December 2009.</u>	
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. <u>Revised contracts will be added to the County Forest Plans and WDNR Central Office staff will monitor for follow through.</u>	
AUDITOR REVIEW OF COMPANY'S PLAN: <u>Plan appears adequate to resolve the issue; evidence of completing the actions described above should be provided to the NSF Lead Auditor by December 8, 2009.</u>	
STATUS: <u>Open</u> AUDITOR/DATE: <u>Mike Ferrucci October 9, 2009</u>	
AUDITOR REVIEW OF COMPANY'S COMPLETED ACTION: <u>Standardized contract provisions specifying BMP compliance have been added in all counties- details below.</u>	
STATUS: <u>Closed</u> AUDITOR/DATE: <u>Mike Ferrucci December 2, 2009</u>	

STATUS LEGEND: OPEN = CA Plan Accepted CLOSED = CA implemented, verified & accepted REJECTED = C/A Plan or Implementation rejected

Review of County Forest Timber Sale contracts

- Completed 9/09. 7 counties in total did not have BMPs for water quality specifically in their contract. All counties were applying BMPs on sales and some had BMPs included as part of their timber sale prospectus which is arguably a part of the timber sale contract. In your report you listed Juneau County as not having BMPs however they actually did (the revision in the plan may have been an older version). They have since revised their contract again and I have included it as well.
- Documentation: Spreadsheet showing results of timber sale contract review

Revisions to Timber Sale contracts

- Completed in 6 of the 7 counties. Washburn county has BMP language in their timber sale prospectus which is part of their contract. They are finalizing changes to the contract itself and getting the necessary County Board / Forestry Committee approvals.
- Documentation: Revised contracts for Ashland, Florence, Forest, Jackson, Oneida, Wood and Juneau

2009 Corrective and Preventive Action Request (CAR)

Company/Location: <u>Wisconsin DNR County Forest System</u> Auditor: <u>Mike Ferrucci, Dave Wager</u> Location of Finding: <u>Jackson County</u> Discussed with: <u>Jeff Barkley and Jim Zahasky</u>	Date: <u>August 21, 2009</u> FRS # <u>1Y943</u> CAR Number: <u>SFI-2009-03</u> Previous CAR Number/Date: <u>None</u> Nonconformance Type (underline): Major <u>Minor</u>
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AUDITOR FINDING: Standard Number and Clause: 2005-2009 Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard® Indicator 2.3.4: "Post-harvest conditions conducive to maintaining site productivity (e.g., limited rutting, retained down woody debris, minimized skid trails)."

Description: Minor Non-conformance: Two harvests in Jackson County (Sale 1994 and Sale 2114) had excessive rutting; these harvests were in wet areas where initial sale conditions called for logging during frozen conditions but an exception was granted for dry season logging. The sale administration notes for 2114 had no indication of the issue; for sale 1994 sale administration notes indicate the logger was directed to come back onto the sale to fix the ruts but those efforts were not totally successful.

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. Rutting metrics were implemented in 2008 and officially added to the Jackson County timber sale contract earlier in 2009. Unusually dry conditions provided an opportunity for the County to expand on the harvesting season which was originally "frozen ground only". That decision should have required closer scrutiny of the sale. The rutting on these two sales was basically a breakdown in administering the sales.

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.
In May of 2009 Jackson County convened a meeting of loggers serving Jackson County to discuss the timber sale program and to solicit feedback. In September of 2009 a letter was sent to the loggers following up on recommendations that came out of that meeting and also highlighting the findings of the forest certification audit in August 2009. Jackson County will be strengthening the administration and documentation of their timber sale inspections from this point forward by documenting inspections in the field and using Timber Sale closeout checklists. Examples of timber sale inspection forms and closeout checklists provided to County – Sept. 2009. Jackson County Forest staff will be continue to bear responsibility for maintaining and filing all timber sale inspection forms and check lists.

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.
Timber sale inspection forms will be reviewed periodically by the County Forest Administrator. Timber sale closeout checklists will be reviewed prior to sale closure by the County Forest Administrator & DNR.

AUDITOR REVIEW OF COMPANY’S PLAN:

The plan appears to define the causes and address the immediate and longer-term actions to correct and prevent. It will be reviewed in the next annual audit.

STATUS: Open AUDITOR/DATE: Mike Ferrucci October 9, 2009

AUDITOR REVIEW OF COMPANY’S COMPLETED ACTION:

STATUS: _____ AUDITOR/DATE: _____

STATUS LEGEND:

OPEN = CA Plan Accepted **CLOSED** = CA implemented, verified & accepted **REJECTED** = C/A Plan or Implementation rejected



Section D
SFI Reporting Form

COMPANY CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Certified Company		Wisconsin County Forest Program		
Address	Street, No.	101 S Webster Street - FR/4		
	City	Madison	Zip/Postal Code	53703
	State or Province	Wisconsin		
Contact person		Jeffrey Barkley, County Forests Specialist		
Telephone		608-264-9217	Fax	
E-mail	jeffrey.barkley@wisconsin.gov	Company website	http://www.wisconsincountyforests.com/	

CERTIFICATE INFORMATION

Forest Certification achieved (SFI, CSA)	SFI		
Certificate number	NSF-SFIS-1Y943		
Certification Date (mm/dd/yy)		Certificate Expiry Date (mm/dd/yy)	
Text in Scope Line of Certificate	The sustainable forestry activities and land management operations of participating counties within the Wisconsin County Forest System, encompassing approximately 2,188,793 acres of forestland in the following 25 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, and Wood.		
Certification Body Name	NSF-ISR		
Accreditation Body Name	ANAB		
Accreditation Number	NSF-ISR 1301672-071107		
Canada Only: Notification Fee Paid	Yes	No	

CERTIFIED FOREST INFORMATION

Forest area (to which certification applies)	2,188,793 ACRES	HECTARES	
SFI Certification ¹ Breakout by State/Province	State/Province Wisconsin 2,188,793 ac/ha	State/Province	ac/ha
	State/Province	ac/ha	State/Province
Land ownership	% 100 public	%	private
Is this same area certified to another forest management standard? (mark with an 'x')	X YES	NO	
	If Yes, to which standard: CSA SFI X FSC	If Yes, what portion of the acres/hectares (and AAC for certificates in Canada) reported on this form was previously certified?	
	2,188,793 (100%) acres OR	ha	AAC
CANADA ONLY Is the certification located in the Boreal?	% Boreal (acres)	% Boreal (hectares)	
	% Boreal (m3)	% Boreal (m3)	
CANADA ONLY AAC in m ³ (to which certification applies)	(For private lands use annual average harvest.)		

¹ SFI certificates may be multi-site and cross state and country borders. For accounting and reporting services, please provide the break-down if the certified forestland is in more than one state/province.

² Please refer to Principle 6 for AAC reporting guidelines