

Maryland DNR Forest Service

Tawes Building, 580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis State Maryland 21401

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

Surveillance Audit



NSF International

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NSF International Forestry Program Audit Report

A. Program Participant Name
Maryland DNR Forest Service

NSF Customer Number (FRS)
0Y301

Contact Information (Name, Title, Phone & Email)

Jack Perdue
Forest Resource Planning
Maryland Forest Service
Department of Natural Resources
580 Taylor Ave., E-1
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
[410-260-8505](tel:410-260-8505) (office)
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B. Scope of Certification

The forest management program of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources on the following Maryland State Forests: Chesapeake Forest Lands, Pocomoke State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest, Garrett State Forest, Potomac State Forest, and the Savage River State Forest. The SFI Certificate Number is NSF-SFIS-0Y301.

Locations Included in the Certification

Chesapeake Forest Lands
Pocomoke State Forest
Green Ridge State Forest
Garrett State Forest
Potomac State Forest
Savage River State Forest

C. NSF Audit Team

Tucker Watts

D. Audit Dates

April 24–27, 2017

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

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

Company Documentation (Program Manual, Procedures, etc.)

Maryland State Forest Management Plans (<http://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/mdforests.aspx>)
Maryland State Forest Annual Work Plans
MFS Policy Procedure Manual (Operation Order 2015-601 Effective: April 1, 2015, Timber Operation Order)

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

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

Major: Minor: 2

Summary of nonconformities

1. In the FY2017 Annual Work Plans (AWP) for western State Forests the Ecologically Significant Area (ESA) Plans have not been completed. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 1.1.1 i)
2. On the Maryland DNR Forest Service website the words “Sustainable Forestry Initiative” do not include the registered trademark - ®. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 5 Part 4, Indicator 4.2)

In addition, 1 opportunity for improvement (OFIs) was identified.

1. There is an Opportunity for Improvement by including in forest management plans more information (known by forest managers) about the role of conifers in the natural history, historic composition, and ecology of higher-elevation portions of the western forests. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 1.1.1 i)

There were six areas where the finding was “Exceeds the Requirements”:

1. The MD DNR program exceeds the requirements for addressing management and *protection of rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, other water bodies and riparian areas* during all phases of management. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 3.2.1)
2. The MD DNR program exceeds the requirements for plans that address wet-weather events in order to maintain water quality. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 3.2.4)
3. The MD DNR program exceeds the requirements for the protection of threatened and endangered species. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 4.2.1)
4. The MD DNR program exceeds the requirements address visual quality management. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, Indicator 5.1.1)
5. The MD DNR’s use of information and expert advice or stakeholder consultation in the identification special sites for protection exceeds the requirements for this indicator. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, Indicator 6.1.1)
6. The Maryland Forest Service has implemented an exceptional program for contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, Indicator 13.1.1)

G. Changes to Operations or to the Standard

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

- Yes (Please explain:
- No

H. Other Issues Reviewed

- Yes No N/A Public report from previous audit(s) is posted on the [SFI/SBP/etc.] website
- Yes No N/A Relevant industry specific logos or labels (SFI, PEFC, etc.) are utilized correctly.
- Yes No N/A Relevant accreditation logos (ANSI or ANAB) are utilized correctly and meet rules specified in NSF SOP 14680 and SOP 4876.
- Yes No N/A Nonconformities from previous audit were reviewed. [If yes, explain]

I. Future Audit Schedule

Following the initial registration audit, continued certification requires annual assessments commonly referred to as "Surveillance Audits". Additionally, at the end of the certification period, maintaining certification requires the completion of a recertification or "Reassessment Audit". The following table lists the dates of the audits in the current certification period and (for multi-site certificates) the sites chosen at each visit.

Registration / Reassessment	Surveillance 1	Surveillance 2	Surveillance 3	Surveillance 4
Date(s)	Date(s)	Date(s)	Date(s)	Date(s)
April 7-11, 2014	April 7-9, 2015	April 26-28, 2016	April 24-27, 2017	
Sites visited	Sites visited	Sites visited	Sites visited	Sites visited
	Chesapeake Forest Lands, Garrett State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest	Green Ridge State Forest, Garrett State Forest, Savage River State Forest	Chesapeake State Forest, Pocomoke State Forest	

J. Appendices

- [Appendix 1:](#) Audit Notification Letter and Audit Schedule
- [Appendix 2:](#) SFI Forest Management Public Summary Report
- [Appendix 3:](#) Audit Standard Checklist(s): SFI Forest Management Standard
- [Appendix 4:](#) Meeting Attendance



Appendix 1

NSF International Forestry Program Audit Notification Letter

April 10, 2017

Jack Perdue, Maryland DNR Forest Service
580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Confirmation of SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 Surveillance Audit

Dear Mr. Perdue,

As we discussed, I will be conducting your SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 Surveillance Audit as described in the attached itinerary. Please confirm that these dates are still appropriate for the audit of your program's continued conformance to the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard.

Preparing for the Audit

A key part of the audit is a review of selected evidence related to your program, which may include:

- SFI Procedures
- SFI Evidence Manual
- Forest management planning
- Harvest trends
- Forest inventory system
- Documentation of forest practices
- Documentation for conservation of biological diversity
- Program for protection of T&E species, FECV, and special sites
- Management of harvesting on visual quality – aesthetics, harvest size, green-up requirements
- Efficient use of fiber resources
- Recognition and respect of Indigenous Peoples' Rights
- Compliance with applicable laws and regulations
- Documentation for participation in research and regional assessments
- Knowledge of climate change impacts on wildlife, wildlife habitats and conservation of biological diversity
- Public outreach for sustainable forestry
- Internal Audit records
- Management Review records
- Training records
- Monitoring of BMPs
- Documentation for operation of complaint procedure
- Policies regarding certification

Please have this information available for me **during the audit**.

During the Audit we will focus on the following SFI Objectives and Performance Indicators: Objective 3, Performance Measure 4.2, Performance Measure 4.3, Objective 6, Objective 8, Objective 13, Objective 14, and Objective 15.



Scope of Certification: The forest management program of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources on the following Maryland State Forests: Chesapeake Forest Lands, Pocomoke State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest, Garrett State Forest, Potomac State Forest, and the Savage River State Forest. The SFI Certificate Number is NSF-SFIS-0Y301.

Role of SFI Inc. Office of Label Use and Licensing

As a reminder, your organization is responsible for contacting SFI, Inc. and complying with all requirements before using or changing any SFI label or logo. Your contact is:

Rachel Dierolf
Manager of Statistics and Labeling
Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc.
900 17th Street NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20006
613-274-0124
rachel.dierolf@sfiprogram.org

Agenda for Review

Attached for your review is the tentative agenda that will guide the conduct of the audit. Please contact me via email or phone if you would like to recommend changes or have any questions regarding what is needed for the audit.

Thank you for selecting NSF International to provide your audit services.

Sincerely,

Tucker Watts

Lead Auditor, NSF
601-622-6487
Jtwatts1@gmail.com



Audit Agenda

Type of Audit

- Readiness Review (Stage 1)
 Registration (Stage 2)
 Surveillance
 Reassessment
 Transfer
 Verification
 Other _____

Audit Objectives

Determine if certification should be maintained.

Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Activity/Process and Location to be Audited	Auditor
April 24, 2017	8:00 AM	Office – Opening Meeting, presentation of MD DNR, changes to management system, results of most recent management review, finalize field itinerary, etc.	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
	8:30 AM	Review of the SFI Program (SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard) Objectives 1-15 Requirements for Forest Management Standard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources 2. Conservation of Biological Diversity 3. Protection of Special Sites 4. Recognize and Respect Indigenous People’ Rights 5. Public Land Management Responsibilities 6. Communication and Public Reporting 7. Management Review and Continual Improvement 	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
	11:00 AM	Field – Audit team together for calibration	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
	4:30 PM	Summary of day – Discuss agenda for next day	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
April 25, 2017	8:00 AM	Agenda Review	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
	8:15 AM	Review of Field Sites	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
	4:30 PM	Summary of day – Discuss agenda for next day	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
April 26, 2017	8:00 AM	Agenda Review	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister



	8:15 AM	Review of Field Sites	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
	1:00 OM	Forest Management Contractor's office – View any documentation, records, GIS, etc. related to latest activities and any follow-up to field-related questions.	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
	4:30 PM	Summary of day – Discuss agenda for next day	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
April 27, 2017	8:00 AM	Agenda Review	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
	8:15 AM	Auditor deliberations	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister
	10:30 AM	Closing Meeting (Auditors depart no later than 1:00pm)	Tucker Watts/Kyle Meister



Appendix 2

Maryland DNR Forest Service 2017 SFI Forest Management Summary Report

Introduction

The SFI Program of the Maryland DNR Forest Service of Annapolis, Maryland has achieved continuing conformance with the SFI® 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard, according to the NSF SFIS Certification Audit Process and has specifically demonstrated conformance to the sustainable harvest level requirement (Performance Measure 1.1).

The Maryland DNR Forest Service initially obtained SFI Certification from NSF on July 24, 2003 and the program was re-certified in July 2006. Initially only the Chesapeake Forest Lands were certified, with the Pocomoke State Forest added in 2009 as part of an expansion of scope that included other recently acquired lands. In 2011 the organization sought and was granted recertification within the expanded scope based on an audit of the six largest state forests against the SFI 2010-2014 Standard. The state forests included in the current scope were re-certified to the SFIS in April of 2014. The most recent audit was a surveillance audit in April 2016.

Maryland DNR Forest Service has an extensive program for harvest planning and approval. A Sustainable Forest Management Plan has been developed for each forest. Harvests levels have been modeled by forest type for sustainability by area control for a 50-year planning horizon. From the Sustainable Forest Management Plan an Annual Work Plan is developed. Included in the Annual Work Plan are planned harvests. The Annual Work Plan is reviewed by various agencies in the Maryland DNR, and a Citizen's Advisory Team. It is also posted on the Maryland DNR Forest Service website for public comment for a period of 30 days. Following review of comments the finalized Plan is approved and posted on the Maryland DNR Forest Service website.

This report describes the results of the 2017 Surveillance Audit which considered changes in operations, the management review system, and efforts at continuous improvement. A subset of the SFI requirements were selected for detailed review.

Maryland's State Forests

Maryland DNR Forest Service is responsible for the management of the 215,607 acres of Maryland State Forests through a variety of designations. The Forest Service is supported by other agencies within the Department of Natural Resources including Wildlife, Fisheries, Heritage, and the Natural Resources Police. Various management plans provide a useful summary of the importance of these forestlands and the broad policy goals:

Excerpted from the Savage River State Forest Draft Management Plan:

'The resources and values provided from state forests reach people throughout the State and beyond. These resources and values range from economic to aesthetic and from scientific to inspirational. The Department of Natural Resources is mandated by law to consider a wide variety of issues and uses when pursuing a management strategy for these forests. The importance of considering these factors is acknowledged in the Annotated Code, which establishes the following policy pertaining to state forests and parks:

"Forests, streams, valleys, wetlands, parks, scenic, historic and recreation areas of the state are basic assets. Their proper use, development, and preservation are necessary to protect and promote the health, safety, economy and general welfare of the people of the state. It is the policy of the state to encourage the economic development and the use of its natural resources for the improvement of the local economy, preservation of natural beauty, and promotion of the recreational and leisure interest throughout the state." (Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article §5-102)

The Department recognizes the many benefits provided by state forests and has established a corresponding management policy in regulation.

"The state forests are managed to promote the coordinated uses of their varied resources and values for the benefit of all people, for all time. Water, wildlife, wood, natural beauty and opportunities for natural environmental recreation, wildlands experience, research demonstration areas, and outdoor education are major forest benefits. "(Code of Maryland Regulations 08.07.01.01)'

The audit was performed by NSF on April 24-27, 2017 by an audit team headed by Tucker Watts, Lead Auditor. Kyle Meister served as a team member. Audit team members fulfill the qualification criteria for conducting audits contained in SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules, Section 9 - Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation.



The objective of the audit was to assess conformance of the firm's SFI Program to the requirements of the SFI 2015-2019 Standard and Rules, Section 2 – Forest Management.

The scope of the audit included forest management operations. Forest practices that were the focus of field inspections included those that have been under active management over the planning period of the past 3 years. In addition practices conducted earlier were also reviewed as appropriate (regeneration and BMP issues, for example); SFI obligations to promote sustainable forestry practices, to seek legal compliance, and to incorporate continual improvement systems were also within the scope of the audit.

The SFI Standard was used without modifying any requirements. SFI requirements that are outside of the scope of Maryland's SFI program were excluded from the scope of the SFI Certification Audit as follows:

- Indicator 10.1.2. Research on genetically engineered trees via forest tree biotechnology shall adhere to all applicable federal, state, and provincial regulations and international protocols ratified by the United States and/or Canada depending on jurisdiction of management. Maryland DNR Forest Service does not participate in research on genetically engineered trees.

Audit Process

NSF initiated the SFI audit process with a series of planning phone calls and emails to reconfirm the scope of the audit, review the SFI Indicators and evidence to be used to assess conformance, verify that Maryland DNR Forest Service was prepared to proceed to the SFI Audit, and to prepare a detailed audit plan.

The audit was governed by a detailed audit plan designed to enable the audit team to efficiently determine conformance with the applicable requirements. The plan provided 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 reviewed a sample of the written documentation assembled to provide objective evidence of conformance. NSF 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 protocols. NSF 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 conformance, major non-conformance, minor non-conformance, opportunities for improvement, and practices that exceeded the requirements of the standard.

A report was prepared and final approval was done by an independent Certification Board Member assigned by NSF. Follow-up or Surveillance Audits are required by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard[®]. The next Surveillance Audit is scheduled for April, 2018.

Overview of Audit Findings

Maryland's SFI Program demonstrated conformance against the SFI 2015-2019 Standard. There were two non-conformances, and three "Opportunities for Improvement". The program has continued to exceed the standard in several areas. As such, the program has earned continuing certification.

There were no 2016 Non-Conformances.

Two Minor Non-Conformances were identified in the 2017 audit:

1. In the FY2017 Annual Work Plans (AWP) for western State Forests the Ecologically Significant Area (ESA) Plans have not been completed. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules[®], Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 1.1.1 i)
2. On the Maryland DNR Forest Service website the words "Sustainable Forestry Initiative" do not include the registered trademark -[®]. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules[®], Section 5 Part 4, Indicator 4.2)

Progress in implementing these corrective action plans will be reviewed in subsequent surveillance audits.

One opportunity for improvement (OFI) was identified in the 2017 audit:

1. There is an Opportunity for Improvement by including in forest management plans more information (known by forest managers) about the role of conifers in the natural history, historic composition, and ecology of higher-elevation portions of the western forests. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules[®], Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 1.1.1 i)

These findings do not indicate a current deficiency, but served to alert Maryland DNR Forest Service to areas that could be strengthened or which could merit future attention.

NSF also identified the following areas where forestry practices and operations of Maryland DNR Forest Service exceed the basic requirements of the standard:

1. The MD DNR program exceeds the requirements for addressing management and *protection* of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, other water bodies and *riparian areas* during all phases of management. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 3.2.1)
2. The MD DNR program exceeds the requirements for plans that address wet-weather events in order to maintain water quality. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 3.2.4)
3. The MD DNR program exceeds the requirements for the protection of threatened and endangered species. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, 1Indicator 4.2.1)
4. The MD DNR program exceeds the requirements address visual quality management. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, Indicator 5.1.1)
5. The MD DNR's use of information and expert advice or stakeholder consultation in the identification special sites for protection exceeds the requirements for this indicator. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, Indicator 6.1.1)
6. The Maryland Forest Service has implemented an exceptional program for contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues. (SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, Indicator 13.1.1)

General Description of Evidence of Conformity

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

Objective 1 Forest Management Planning

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

Summary of Evidence: The forest management plans for each state forest and supporting documentation and the associated inventory data and growth analyses were the key evidence of conformance. The plans for all six of the forests involved (four plans cover the six forests) were key to this finding.

Objective 2 Forest Health and Productivity

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

Summary of Evidence: Field observations and associated records were used to confirm practices. Maryland DNR Forest Service has programs for reforestation, for protection against insects, diseases, and wildfire, and for careful management of activities which could potentially impact soil and long-term productivity. Special recreation-oriented grants allow for some road maintenance work, further supporting conformance.

Objective 3 Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources

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

Summary of Evidence: Field observations of a range of sites were the key evidence. Auditors visited the portions of field sites that were closest to water resources. Auditors also confirmed strong programs for planning and for project oversight that ensure protection of water resources.

Objective 4 Conservation of Biological Diversity

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

Summary of Evidence: Field observations, written plans and policies for the protection of old growth, High Conservation Value Forests, and representative sample areas were the key evidence used to assess the requirements involved biodiversity conservation. This was supported by the availability of college-trained field biologists to conduct project reviews.

Objective 5 Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits

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

Summary of Evidence: Field observations of completed operations and policies/procedures for visual quality were assessed during the evaluation. Interviews with stakeholders and partners, maps and descriptions of recreation sites, combined with selected field visits helped confirm a strong recreation program. Stakeholder contacts supported the DNR's statements regarding efforts to balance recreational use and environmental protections.



Objective 6 Protection of Special Sites

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

Summary of Evidence: Field observations of completed operations, GIS maps and other records of special sites, training records, and written protection plans were all assessed during the evaluation. Partners within the DNR and outside stakeholders participate in identification of special sites.

Objective 7 Efficient Use of Fiber Resources

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

Summary of Evidence: Field observations of completed operations, contract clauses, and discussions with supervising field foresters and with loggers provided the key evidence. The Maryland Forest Service is working to improve markets for forest products, particularly markets related to bioenergy.

Objective 8 Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights

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

Summary of Evidence: All of the management plans include the policy statement developed to recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights. Mechanisms are in place to receive and act on any comments received.

Objective 9 Legal and Regulatory Compliance

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

Summary of Evidence: The program employs specialists to ensure that conservation laws are followed. All project receive extensive review by interdisciplinary teams. Protocols are in place which have been checked to ensure compliance.

Objective 10 Forestry Research, Science and Technology

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

Summary of Evidence: Discussions with stakeholders and support for research on state forest lands were the key evidence used. Forests are used for several ongoing research projects such as research projects involving Chestnut blight hypo-virulence, Wood rat biology, and biology of Spotted skunks, as well as a major trial of a pesticide to control the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid.

Objective 11 Training and Education

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

Summary of Evidence: Interviews, review of training records, and the records of support for the Maryland Master Logger Program were key evidence for this objective. All harvests are conducted by logging crews with one or more Maryland Master Loggers.

Objective 12 Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach

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

Summary of Evidence: Forest managers interviewed described various outreach/educational efforts including periodic tree planting events, annual 1-day course for Garret County students in preparation for the Maryland Envirothon; two courses at Garrett College (Dendrology, Forest Management); periodic hikes and tours; speaking to local citizens groups; and forestry talks at the GRSF overlook to tour bus groups among others. Interviews with members of two of the citizen's advisory groups, and the DNR website were also used to confirm conformance with these requirements.

Objective 13 Public Land Management Responsibilities

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on public lands.

Summary of Evidence: The audit team reviewed written and on-line documentation of the extensive public involvement processes. The organization has a thorough process for involvement in public land planning. Annual work plan (AWP) drafts are provided to citizen advisory councils and field visits are scheduled to solicit input. After these revisions are made the drafts are made available for review by the general public. The web site and the AWP's contain information on the review process, and the results of the input are summarized in the AWP's.

Objective 14 Communications and Public Reporting

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

Summary of Evidence: Reports filed with SFI Inc. and the SFI Inc. website provided the key evidence. The state forests web site includes the complete certification reports from the past years.

Objective 15. Management Review and Continual Improvement

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

Summary of Evidence: The state forests web site includes the organization's Sustainable Forestry Initiative Management Reviews for the past 10 years. The most recent of these program reviews, agendas and notes from field reviews, and interviews with personnel from all involved levels in the organization were assessed to determine conformance.

Relevance of Forestry Certification

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

1. Sustainable Forestry

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

2. Forest Productivity and Health

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

3. Protection of Water Resources

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

4. Protection of Biological Diversity

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

5. Aesthetics and Recreation

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

6. Protection of Special Sites

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

7. Responsible Fiber Sourcing Practices in North America

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

8. Legal Compliance

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

9. Research

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

10. Training and Education

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

11. Community Involvement and Social Responsibility

To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry on all lands through community involvement, socially responsible practices, and through recognition and respect of Indigenous Peoples' rights and traditional forest-related knowledge.

12. Transparency

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



13. Continual Improvement

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

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

(Applies only to the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard)

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

Source: Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Standard, 2015–2019 Edition

For Additional Information Contact:

Norman Boatwright	Daniel Freeman	Jack Perdue
NSF Forestry Program Manager	NSF Project Manager	Maryland DNR Forest Service
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Appendix 3

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

OY301 – Maryland DNR Forest Service

Date of audit(s): April 24-27, 2017

1.2 Additional Requirements

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

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

Input row with checkboxes for N/A, Conforms, Exceeds, O.F.I., Minor NC, Major NC

Audit Notes: Use of the words "Sustainable Forestry Initiative" does not have the registration trademark. (SFI 2015-2019 Rules for Use of SFI On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks, Indicator 4.2)

Objective 1 Forest Management Planning

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

Performance Measure 1.1

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

Input row with checkboxes for N/A, Conforms, Exceeds, O.F.I., Minor NC, Major NC

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Input row with checkboxes for N/A, Conforms, Exceeds, O.F.I., Minor NC, Major NC

Audit Notes: From the 2016 audit there were 2 Opportunities for Improvement identified for this Indicator. Review of them in 2017 resulted in a Minor CAR and an Opportunity for Improvement.

- 1. In the FY2017 Annual Work Plans (AWP) for western State Forests the Ecologically Significant Area (ESA) Plans have not been completed. (Minor CAR)
2. There is an Opportunity for Improvement by including in forest management plans more information (known by forest managers) about the role of conifers in the natural history, historic composition, and ecology of higher-elevation portions of the western forests.



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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 1.2

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

1.2.1 Program Participants shall not convert one forest cover type to another forest cover type, unless the conversion:

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 1.3

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.



Objective 2 Forest Health and Productivity

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

Performance Measure 2.1

Program Participants shall promptly reforest after final harvest. Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 2.2

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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



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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

2.2.6 Use of *integrated pest management* where feasible.

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

2.2.8 Use of management practices appropriate to the situation, for example:

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 2.3

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.



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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 2.4

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

2.4.1 *Program* to protect forests from damaging agents.

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 2.5

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.



Objective 3 Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources

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

Performance Measure 3.1

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Trained foresters plan and oversee all management activities, with review and approval by senior managers, biologists, and/or biologists and/or specialists who have an impressive depth of knowledge and experience. Contractors have completed license and certifications as available for their work. Confirmed license and certifications of employees and contractors during audit.

Contracts contain requirements for BMP implementation. Witnessed the following contracts: Cut & Hauling Agreement, Stumpage (PAC) Timber Sale Agreement, Lump Sum Timber Sale

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

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

Audit Notes: Contracts contain requirements for BMP implementation. Witnessed the following contracts: Cut & Hauling Agreement, Stumpage (PAC) Timber Sale Agreement, Lump Sum Timber Sale.

3.1.3 Monitoring of overall *best management practices* implementation.

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

Audit Notes: Foresters regularly inspect all ongoing harvests and silviculture operations. Witnessed use of the Forest Harvest Operations – Harvest Site Review On State Lands for monitoring of harvest sites visited and Reforestation Plan Form is used for regeneration sites. Chemical application reports and flight lines were witnessed for chemical applications.

Performance Measure 3.2

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Maryland Forest Service exceeds the requirements for addressing management and *protection* of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, other water bodies and *riparian areas* during all phases of management.

Maryland Forest Service has a comprehensive program for the protection of wetlands and watercourses. Foresters plan all harvests and treatments; other specialists review these. Such protections are the first priority during planning and implementation. All foresters are trained to follow Erosion and Sediment Control Guidelines. Specialists are available for consultation as needed; all activities are subject to interdisciplinary review. Witnessed 2017 AWP Forest Harvest Proposal for State Forest from Internal Silvicultural Audit 2017. “Water Quality & Best Management Practices (BMPs)” is included in the Proposal.

Each forest uses a Pre-Harvest Checklist to document the pre-harvest meeting between the supervising forester and the logging crew.



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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed mapping of rivers, streams, lakes, and other water bodies in GIS databases and for timber sale maps. Witnessed for sites visited.

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

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

Audit Notes: Observations during site visits confirm that plans to manage or protect rivers, streams, lakes, and other water bodies are developed and implemented. Most such features are protected by generous no-cut buffers, or by being placed within large ecological reserves. Buffers witnessed during harvesting, prescribed burns, and chemical application.

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

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

Audit Notes: Maryland Forest Service exceeds the requirements for planning that addresses wet-weather events in order to maintain water quality.

2017 AWP Forest Harvest Proposal for State Forest from Internal Silvicultural Audit 2017 contains section for "Water Quality & Best Management Practices (BMPs)". Foresters work with loggers to ensure an understanding of the allowable amount of soil disturbance and rutting and to ensure that harvests are suspended when soils are too water-saturated to support logging equipment. Wet-weather tracts are set up and sold, or more commonly harvest operations are encouraged to harvest the drier portions of tracts when weather is wet and to harvest the lower, wetter portions of tracts during dry weather periods. Contracts for sale of timber are sufficiently long to allow such operational adjustments, and provisions exist for contract extensions.

Forester's report that most loggers know to avoid operating during wet weather events, and that they check on all loggers when conditions are questionable, with extra inspections for contractors who have less experience on state forest harvests. Contracts include a provision empowering Maryland Forest Service to shut down jobs.

During site visits minimal rutting was witnessed. No impact was witnessed to water quality.



Objective 4 Conservation of Biological Diversity

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

Performance Measure 4.1

Program Participants shall conserve biological diversity. Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: State Forests are managed under a program that is designed to protect and enhance biodiversity as described in each Sustainable Forest Management Plan. The conservation of biological diversity is stated as the goal of management operations. This program incorporates the use of an Interdisciplinary Team (ID team) for the review and approval process of management activities. The ID team includes land managers and a variety of specialists. Based on the results of interviews with participants, it is clear that the working relationships between ID team members remain effective and continue to improve on each of the State Forests. Each forest's Sustainable Forest Management Plan includes an extensive section describing biodiversity present and prescribing general treatments to sustain that diversity, and enhance it where feasible. The plans include stand-level and landscape-level recommendations.

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

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

Audit Notes: Site visits to timber harvesting operations confirm stand-level retention practices meet the policies of the Maryland Forest Service consistent with scientific information. Foresters take the time to assess the stands and identify the most important trees and other elements for retention. Mapping and other forms of documentation exceeds requirement. Field staff layout patterns of retention including both individual trees and islands/groups of retained trees; results include dispersed and clumped green tree retention, a variety of species and size classes and the protection of snags and den trees.

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

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

Audit Notes: Maryland DNR designed and implemented a process for each prescription to include review and approval by the ID teams, Advisory Committees and other Maryland Forest Service personnel. Working relationships with TNC scientists and forest managers supports landscape scale consideration and the opportunity for cooperative management practices that cross property ownership lines.

Interviews of forest managers confirmed that they have extensive knowledge of their forests, including past conditions to some degree, and of the surrounding landscape. The written plans do not provide as much information about landscape scale biodiversity issues as foresters appear to know and to use in decision-making.

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

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

Audit Notes: ID Team and an extensive involvement of specialists ensure knowledge of conservation planning is incorporated. Further, the Maryland Forest Service works closely with other agencies and groups on a variety of forest



conservation efforts. Witnessed in planning and conducting of prescribed burns. Field audit sites and Annual Work Plans reviewed provided good examples from the ID Team process from the past 12 months.

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

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

Audit Notes: The overall goals of the state forest system include protection and enhancement of biodiversity including G1-G2 species, RTE species, and species of concern. Management plans, AWP, interviews, and other programs confirm conformance.

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

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

Audit Notes: Site visits confirmed that ditches, heads of drains (which are forested), vernal pools and other water bodies are buffered or not included in the timber sale area.

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

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

Audit Notes: Program includes identification and field review, prescription, treatment, and monitoring. During identification the invasive exotic plant and animal are documented in the GIS. Witnessed during review of GIS. Maryland State forests records (Annual Summary of pesticide and other chemical use over approx. last 12 months) document efforts to control populations of invasive plants.

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

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

Audit Notes: Management plans and projects reflect a deep understanding of natural disturbances and their roles in development of ecosystems, communities, and biological diversity and use this understanding in developing strategies and plans. Various agencies and organizations work together to plan and implement a prescribed burning plan. During site visits witnessed and discussed the use of prescribed burning to benefit the ecosystem and forest health.

Performance Measure 4.2

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

4.2.1 Program to protect threatened and endangered species.

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

Audit Notes: Maryland Forest Service exceeds the requirements for protection of threatened and endangered species. Rare, threatened and endangered species are recorded in the heritage database. Heritage biologists are involved in planning, review and approval for each management prescription. RTE species protection and management are included in the Forest Management Plan, AWP Forest Harvest Proposal, and GIS. Monitoring efforts follow each management activity that could affect RTE species or their habitats including monitoring of the effects of restoration treatments.

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

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



Audit Notes: FECVs are generally covered within the broader HCVF approach. For example Delmarva Fox Squirrels are favored in the eastern forest by protection measures that have been built into HCVF zones based on the habitat requirements of this species. Interviewed USF&W employees involved with the habitat improvements for the Delmarva Fox Squirrel. Significant strides have been made in volume and quality of habitat.

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

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

Audit Notes: Planning system with over-site and stakeholder input facilitates the conservation of old-growth forests. DNR staff confirmed that there have been no harvests or other activities that have significantly affected old growth stands.

Performance Measure 4.3

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

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

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

Audit Notes: The Maryland Forest Service implements a robust interdisciplinary approach to identifying and protecting ecologically important sites.

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

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

Audit Notes: MD DNR's Natural Heritage Program maintains a database of RTE species. Foresters and specialists try to locate special sites and provide information to the Maryland Natural Heritage Program. Witnessed mapping in review of GIS.

Performance Measure 4.4

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

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

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

Audit Notes: MD DNR's Natural Heritage Program maintains a database of RT&E species. Foresters and specialists try to locate special sites and provide information to the Maryland Natural Heritage Program. Managers and Natural Heritage staff cooperate through participation on the ID team and as a result sites have been identified and mapped and are managed for a variety of exceptional values. Most sites are included in the HCVF or ESA data layers.

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

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

Audit Notes: Maryland DNR's Policy & Procedure Manual and each of the five management plans refer to the process of extensive review by the ID team for each proposed project. These ID teams represent the primary method for ensuring that current scientific knowledge is incorporated into treatments.



Objective 5 Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits

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

Performance Measure 5.1

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

5.1.1 Program to address visual quality management.

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

Audit Notes: Maryland Forest Service exceeds the requirements for visual quality management. During site visits and interviews the planning for timber sales was discussed. The creation of harvest shape and buffering of roads enhanced visual quality.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 5.2

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 5.3

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.



Performance Measure 5.4

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.



Objective 6 Protection of Special Sites

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

Performance Measure 6.1

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Maryland Forest Service exceeds the requirements for identification and selection of special sites for protection. The MD DNR’s use of information and expert advice or stakeholder consultation in the identification special sites for protection exceeds the requirements for this indicator.

Maryland State Forests exceed the requirements based in thorough assessment of resources by specialists and foresters before and after projects are planned and implemented. Review of AWP’s, state forest plans, and other documents and interviews with internal and external stakeholders contribute to the finding.

As confirmed through interviews, MD DNR Heritage data is collected by Heritage biologists as well as by non-agency specialists. Based on data and advice, field staff identify and select special areas including for example representative sample areas for protection and for management and/or restoration. Management and restoration projects are planned, presented, reviewed and approved through annual work plans by the ID team which includes stakeholders and experts. Management plans and annual work plans are presented for review and comment to both experts and stakeholders. Witnessed in Sustainable Forest Management Plan for Chesapeake Forest Lands.

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

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

Audit Notes: Maps and observations confirmed in Forest Management Plans and maps for practices visited during site visits. Witnessed during interviews and demonstration of GIS system. Confirmed special sites visited during site visits were included in GIS.



Objective 7 Efficient Use of Fiber Resources

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

Performance Measure 7.1

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

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.



Objective 8 Recognize and Respect *Indigenous Peoples’* Rights

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

Performance Measure 8.1

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

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

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

Audit Notes: The policy is stated in each of the five Sustainable Forest Management Plans. Witnessed in Sustainable Forest Management Plan for Chesapeake Forest Lands.

“The Department has a commitment to recognize and respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples. It is the mission of The Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs to “promote the awareness and understanding of historical and contemporary American Indian contributions in Maryland.” The role of the State Forest management in promoting this state mission is through the following practices:

- a. understand and respect traditional forest-related knowledge;*
- b. identify and protect spiritually, historically, or culturally important sites;*
- c. address the use of non-timber forest products of value to American Indians on state forests; and*
- d. respond to American Indians’ inquiries and concerns received.”*

Performance Measure 8.2

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

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

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

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

Audit Notes: As part of the management planning process, tribal representatives are invited to comment on the FME’s planned activities. No comments have been received during the past three years, per interviews with FME staff and review of the AWP’s. During initial management planning conducted during the first few year of certification yielded some comments from tribal representatives that have been incorporated into management plans. Also, all state forest proposals are reviewed by the Maryland Historical Trust during the planning phase. FME staff maintains contact with the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs since tribal leadership changes periodically and, at times, there are conflicts between tribes over political issues according to FME staff. According to interviews with FME staff in Chesapeake/ Pocomoke, there are recent efforts at re-establishing contact with a recognized tribe since there has been a leadership change. Email records of these communications were demonstrated onsite.



Performance Measure 8.3

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

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

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

Audit Notes: There are no tribal forest management or ownership/ use rights on FME lands. There are no sites of special tribal significance on the certified FMU. There are no tribes with legal rights or binding agreements to the FMU, as confirmed through interviews with staff and review of tenure documents.

Routine communication with Chiefs in regards to management activities and public posting of AWP's on the forest web site.

FME staff reported that activities in 2016-17 did not affect any tribal issues.

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

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

Audit Notes: No comments received during the past year.



Objective 9 Legal and Regulatory Compliance

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

Performance Measure 9.1

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

9.1.1 Access to relevant laws and regulations in appropriate locations.

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 9.2

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Objective 10 Forestry Research, Science and Technology

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

Performance Measure 10.1

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 10.2

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

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 10.3

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.



Objective 11 Training and Education

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

Performance Measure 11.1

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 11.2

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

Indicators:

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

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



k. awareness of emerging technologies.

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Objective 12 Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach

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

Performance Measure 12.1

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

Performance Measure 12.2

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

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.



Performance Measure 12.3

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Not reviewed in 2017 Surveillance Audit.



Objective 13 **Public Land Management Responsibilities**

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

Performance Measure 13.1

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Maryland Forest Service exceeds the requirements for involvement of government entities and the public in public land planning.

MFS has a very thorough process for involvement in public land planning. Annual work plan drafts are provided to citizen advisory councils and field visits scheduled to solicit input. After these revisions are made the drafts are made available for review by the general public. The web site and the AWP's contain information on the review process, and the results of the input are summarized in the AWP. Annual Work Plan process is diagramed in the Sustainable Forest Management Plan for Chesapeake Forest Lands, Chapter 11, Figure 17. Annual Work Plan Process.

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

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

Audit Notes: The Maryland Forest Service has implemented an exceptional program for contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues.

Stakeholders including community (social), ecological, and economic interests observed the audits and were interviewed. Citizen Advisory Committees are set up for the forests or groups of forests; meeting minutes and agendas were reviewed. Forests maintain "complaints" logs; review indicated that complaints are not regular and are recorded including follow-up actions.

AWPs for Maryland's State Forests comprise remarkable compilation of information the management of these forests. AWP's incorporate comments from the advisory boards, the ID Team, and other citizens. The summary of planned vs. actual treatments is an important part of these valuable documents.

Interviewed members of the Citizens Advisory Board that attended audit.



Objective 14 Communications and Public Reporting

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

Performance Measure 14.1

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

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Witnessed 2014 and 2016 Summary Audit Reports on SFI, Inc. website. Summary reports include required elements.

Performance Measure 14.2

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

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

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

Audit Notes: The 2016 Survey was submitted on March 31, 2017. Confirmed by email from Rachel Dierolf, SFI, Inc.

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

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

Audit Notes: Maryland Forest Service demonstrated robust and detailed record-keeping procedures during the audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Reports are kept in files, and those back through 2009 are kept on-line. Witnessed past reports.



Objective 15 Management Review and Continual Improvement

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

Performance Measure 15.1

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: All forests conduct and document regular logging inspections & seedling survival/regeneration counts.

Monitoring of ESA restoration projects by Natural Heritage Commission.

Interdisciplinary Teams conduct Annual Work Plan reviews for all projects

The web page for the state forests (<http://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/mdforests.aspx>) provides links to monitoring information for each forest.

Chapter – 10 Chesapeake Forest Monitoring Plan (page 106)

Internal Silvicultural Audit (ISA) process is part of the system.

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

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

Audit Notes: State Forest Managers meet regularly (certification is one agenda item), with one other meeting each year focused on certification.

Minutes from State Forest Managers Meeting, Pasadena Office, October 20, 2015; State Forest Managers Meeting Pasadena Office, October 19, 2016

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

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

Audit Notes: The state forests web site includes the organization’s Sustainable Forestry Initiative Management Reviews for the past 10 years.

Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Forest Service, October 19, 2016, 2016 Audit & Certification Standard Review: Attendance

1. Don VanHassent (DNR-MFS); 2. Kenneth Jolly (DNR-MFS); 3. Kip Powers (DNR-MFS); 4. George Eberling (DNR-MFS); 5. Scott Campbell (DNR-MFS); 6. John Denning (DNR-MFS); 7. Mark Beals (DNR-MFS); 8. Mike Schofield (DNR-MFS); 9. Alex Clark (DNR-MFS); 10. Rob Feldt (DNR-MFS); 11. Jack Perdue (DNR-MFS)

(End SFI Forest Management Checklist)



Field Notes

Complex	Location	Acres	Activity	Note	Audit team notes
Monday April 24 - Afternoon Sites					
NA	FME offices	NA	Opening meeting	Introductions, FME update, review audit scope, audit plan, intro/update to FSC and SCS standards and protocols, review of open CARs/OBS, final site selection	Significant progress in updating the forest inventory and modeling was recently completed in the Eastern Region.
WR25	Tankard	29.0	Reforestation	complete	Natural regeneration of loblolly pine attempted, but did not meet stocking requirements of 300 trees per acre in all areas of the stand. So replanting was conducted on 7 X 10 spacing followed by a herbicide application to release pines. Individual retained legacy hardwood and pines were GPS'd and provided to herbicide applicator. Very little damage to non-target species, as confirmed in application flight lines and application records. Property boundaries on four sides of the timber sale left with a buffer of screen trees that function as legacy trees. Green-up witness in adjacent stands. Applicatoors license for Glenn Martin witnessed. Contacts contain required elements.
WR25	Tankard Tract, Stand 11	26.8	Herbicide Application	8oz Arsenal+2.5 oz Herbimax	



WR25	WR25 Tankard, S11	33.5	Final Harvest	99% complete	Legacy and seed trees consisting of pond pine and oak GPS'd and marked with blue paint. Roads matted to protect access. Ditches are clean and stream is free flowing. Stand will be left to regenerate and no seed trees are to be removed. No-harvest areas mapped and equipment limited to skid trails. Buffer left along road for aesthetic management. Green-up requirements met by adjacent stands. Future habitat for Delmarva Fox Squirrel (DFS) and Forest Interior Dwelling Species. Lower elevation site, so operations required dryer conditions. Contacts contain required elements.
P02	Furnace	447.0	Rx Burn	60% complete	Complex of beach dunes with habitat and potential habitat for RTE plants and insects. Observation of habitat management, including deer-exclusion devices. Discussion of habitat and population monitoring and prescribed fire rotation to manage for a mosaic of habitat over time and space. Review of burn plan, prescribed fire safety, training & qualifications. Discussion on collaboration with other government agencies and TNC on prescribed fire.



P02	Nazareth Church T8, s10&14	14.4	Final Harvest	50% complete	Retention of pond pine and short-leaf pine, all GPS'd. 90 year-old regenerated after agricultural abandonment. Observation of SMZ with harvest exclusion and equipment exclusion buffers. Good distribution and use of slash to cover skid trails. Observation of historic cultural site and protection measures. Temporary bridge will be used to cross creek.
P02	Nazareth Church T4 S1,4,8&10- Honeywell	118.0	1st Thinning	20% complete	Sales from four fiscal years lumped into one to enhance bidding process. Boundaries marked with yellow pain and placards. Observation of SMZ, which was allowed to be thinned to 70 BA (60 BA is allowed). Intended to be future DFS core area. Discussion on use of monitoring results to update management strategy and plans. Man-made ditch buffered. Discussed buffering requirements for man-made ditches. Minor skinning of residual trees. Debris used to stabilize skid trails.

Tuesday April 25 - Group 1 Sites

	FME Offices			Document and record review, and employee interviews	Review of training, complaints, stakeholder communications, ownership, and lease records.
	Parker Forestry			Document and record review, and employee interviews	Review of contracts, harvest records (including COC for stumpage, lump-sum, and gatewood), post-harvest monitoring, chemical use



W17	R F Richardson, Stand 1	35.8	Natural Regeneration	complete	2015 regeneration survey following clearcut and to check survival of overstory retention (oak and pine); 2,000 trees per acre, but some patchiness to regeneration so site was treated with an aerial spray to reduce broadleaf and herbaceous competition; post-spray regeneration of loblolly was 2,500-3,000 trees per acre, which likely will require a pre-commercial thinning, but no supplemental planting. Discussion on repairing ruts and site preparation options.
W21	Louis Horner Tract Stands 6,11 & 16	62.3	1st Thinning	complete	Objective to enhance FIDS habitat and protect natural temporal stream connected to perennial tidal stream within coastal protection zone. Observation of hardwood riparian forest (protected area) and stream crossing with 16" culvert, currently covered with leaves, but water is still flowing freely. Discussion on culvert sizing, invasive species control and prevention. Observation of historic site, skid trails, property boundaries, and residual stand, all of which are in good condition. Thinned to 90 BA.
W23	Greenhill Complex, Stands 17, 20,23 & 28	205.0	1st Thinning	45% complete	Future DFS core area, no other special features. Thinned to 90 BA. Skid trails covered with slash and evidence that mats were used in sensitive sections of trails. Little to no residual stand damage. Gatewood sale.



	Warrington Tract		1st Thinning	15% complete	Stumpage sale in which operations were stopped by logging crew due to wet conditions. Observation of hardwood swamp, which was not entered or harvested. Use of slash on skid trails. Some slash has been piled, but likely will be distributed over the site when operations resume. Discussion on the effects of age classes and timber quality on potential timber markets.
Tuesday April 25 - Group 2 Sites					
WR10	Corddry Tract, Stand 12	92.4	1st Thinning	60% complete	Erosion and Sedimentation Plan discussed. No entrance into area. Bridge used for crossing. Bridge has been removed and area stabilized. Density reduced to 70 BA. Tree selection for thinning good.
WR09	Perkins Tract, Stand 3	36.7	Herbicide Application	16oz Arsenal+2oz Escort+2.5oz Herbimax	Shelterwood cut in 2011. Low seed fall and understocked regeneration. Chemical site preparation 8/16. Witnessed and discussed Spill Management and Application Plan. Ditches buffered during spray. Over-spray on adjacent neighbor. Claim discussed and settled with landowner. Seed trees will be removed, soil scarified and planted.
WR11	Shockley	24.7	Afforestation	complete	Afforestation of agriculture field. Witnessed Reforestation Plan. Power line buffered for trees. Hand planting at 7 X 10 spacing. Survival of 485 trees per acre. Boundary lines are



					clearly visible.
WR01	Timmons-Donaway Tract, Stands 3&7	54.6	1st Thinning	complete	Erosion and Sedimentation Plan reviewed and discussed. Tract check for endangered species. Thinning to 70-0 basal area goal. No cut buffer for SMZ. Man-made ditches have been buffered with no entry. Timbers used to cross ditch. Banks are clean and stabilized. Minor skinning of residual stand. Tree selection during thinning improves stand health. No rutting.
Wednesday April 26 - Group 1 Sites					
D21	Bell Tract, Stand 2	16.4	1st Thinning	complete	Discussed Erosion and Sedimentation Plan. Residual BA is 67. Some rutting in main skid trail noted in monitoring. Witnessed rutting and discussed rutting policy and handling of issue. Good tree selection.
D10	Huhne Tract Stand 1	79.9	1st Thinning	10% complete	Vernal pools protected with 50' no cut riparian area. Thinning stand to 60 BA. Erosion and Sedimentation Plan developed. Minor rutting. No damage to soil or water. Boundary well defined. SMZ flagged. Good tree selection. Debris used to stabilize skid trails.



D12	Marshyhope Complex Stands 1,2,8,13&15	138.0	1st Thinning	75% complete	High Conservation Area. Critical Area Plan discussed. Erosion and Sedimentation Plan was developed. Access controlled by gate. Debris used for stabilization of skid trails. Good utilization. No rutting observed. Sale area identified with flagging.
D12	Marshyhope Tract Stands 1 & 49	70.2	1st Thinning	complete	Critical Area Plan discussed. Streams buffered. Erosion and Sedimentation Plan completed. Thinning to 61 BA. Virginia Pine corridors remain to protect residuals and provide wildlife habitat. Debris used to stabilize skid trails. Steam buffer identified with flagging. No entrance in buffer. Buffer has been expanded to compensate for sloping toward stream. Interviewed logger on training, safety meetings and PPE.
D12	Marshyhope	129.0	Rx Burn	complete	Prescribed burn conducted for Natural Heritage Commission. Discussed and witnessed Burn Plan. Benefits include wildlife (Turkeys witnessed on site) and fuel reduction. Interaction with private landowners and citizens discussed. Signs placed on road during burn. Sign with contact information remains after burn (Witnessed on site.)
C03	Messenger Tract Stand 4	26.4	1st Thinning	complete	Thinning basal area 67. Debris used to stabilize skid trails. Tree selection improves residual stand.



C03	Messenger Branch	67.0	Rx Burn	complete	Prescribed burn conducted for quail at Idyle Wild Management Area. Discussed and witnessed Burn Plan. Burn will be conducted at 2-3 year intervals. Benefits include wildlife and rare plants. (Turkeys witnessed on site) and fuel reduction. Plans are to expand burning program and develop a 15 year plan.
Wednesday April 26 - Group 2 Sites					
	Powell Tract		Final Harvest	planned, but not harvested	Observation of pre-harvest meeting between forestry and logging contractor. Completion of pre-harvest checklist and map review with logger, discussion of PPE and use of signage near road and trail entrances, use of mats and other BMPs near sensitive areas, location of sensitive resources, etc.
P02	Furnace T126 S3&4	34.0	1st Thinning	complete	FIDS, DFS future core and ESAs present. Observation of protections for vernal pools. Thinned to 66 BA, which just below desired BA range (70-90); however, smaller trees meant that desired trees per acre were met. Discussion of opportunities to collaborate with natural heritage staff.



P05	Milburn Lndg T17 S11	4.7	Final Harvest	50% complete	Observation of plantation established in the 1940s with significant hardwood component and large pines. Two ESA types, DFS Future Core, natural stream with SMZ marked with flagging, and recreational trails. Harvest was closed due to wet conditions. All sensitive features were avoided during harvest, including retention trees. Observation of property boundaries, which are noted with yellow paint and/or signage.
P05	Mohr-Milburn Landing T15 S30	35.0	1st Thinning	50% complete	FIDS, perennial stream with 125-150 ft no-cut buffer, DFS Future Core area, thinned to 86 BA, hardwood retention includes yellow poplar and oak. Discussion of stream protections and hardwood utilization, which is limited due to proximity to mills. Observation of property boundaries.
S27	Wells Tract - Stands 2,5&7	238.9	1st Thinning	complete	DFS Future Core area, and 50-ft buffer established around ditch. Thinned to 73 BA. Logger had to pull out due to wet conditions at one point; no major issues with roads and skid trails observed. Second thinning and final harvest should have opportunities for release and retention of mast-producing species, mainly oaks. Observation of property boundaries.



S53	Handy Tract - Stands 3,6,7,15 &16	137.3	1st Thinning	60 % complete	Four age classes present, but trees are of similar sizes. Thinned to 75 BA. Observation of stand boundaries, which are marked with tape. Discussion on timber markets and the impacts on types of harvest equipment available.
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Appendix 4



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Mark Belton, Secretary
Joanne Throwe, Deputy Secretary

**CHESAPEAKE & POCOMOKE FOREST
FOREST CERTIFICATION AUDIT ATTENDEES
4/24/17**

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**CHESAPEAKE & POCOMOKE FOREST
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4/26/17**

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FOREST CERTIFICATION AUDIT ATTENDEES
4/26/17

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NSF Audit Attendance Sheet

Company Name: Maryland DNR Forest Service

Location (Plant # and/or City & State): 6572 Snow Hill Rd, Snow Hill MD 21863

Type of Audit: Surveillance Audit – Closing Meeting

Opening Meeting Date: April 24, 2017 Closing Meeting Date: April 27, 2017

NAME (Printed)	TITLE/POSITION	OPENING MEETING (Initials)	CLOSING MEETING (Initials)
Mike Schofield	Maryland Forest Service		MS
Alexander Clark	Maryland Forest Service		AC
Kip Powers	Maryland Forest Service		KP
Kenneth Jolly	Maryland Forest Service		KJ
Jack Perdue	Maryland Forest Service		JP
Stacey Esham	Parker Forestry Services		SE
Skip Jones	Parker Forestry Services		SJ
Kyle Meister	SCS Lead Auditor		KM
Tucker Watts	NSF Lead Auditor		TW