

Maryland DNR Forest Service

Tawes Building, 580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis State Maryland 21401

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

Recertification Audit





NSF Forestry Program Audit Report

A. Certificate Holder

Maryland DNR Forest Service

NSF Customer Number

0Y301

Contact Information (Name, Title, Phone & Email)

Jack Perdue
Forest Resource Planning
[410-260-8505](tel:410-260-8505) (office)
jack.perdue@maryland.gov

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 Forest Management number is NSF-SFI-FM-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. Audit Team

Keri Yankus, Sr. NSF Lead Auditor
Michelle Matteo, Sr. NSF Lead Auditor

Audit Date(s) (If multiple locations were audited, indicate the date of each site visit)

April 2 & 3, 2019 MD-DCR Office – Snow Hill Office-Pocomoke State Forest (SF) & Chesapeake (SF)
6572 Snow Hill Rd, Snow Hill, MD
April 4, 2019 Green Ridge SF -28700 Headquarters Drive NE, Flintstone, MD
April 5, 2019 Green Ridge SF and the Main office Annapolis- 580 Taylor Ave, Annapolis, MD

D. Significant Changes to Operations or to the Standard(s)

None

E. Audit Results

No nonconformities or opportunities for improvement were identified.

There was/were 7 opportunity(ies) for improvement identified.

SFI 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.

OFI: Regeneration criteria are forest-type specific. Confirmed that Western SFs use Oak-SILVAH for criteria and for protocols for regeneration surveys. No regeneration delays were observed in the field. Although planting is rare, there is an opportunity for improvement in the regeneration criteria in order to achieve acceptable species and stocking levels for naturally regenerating stands in the Eastern Region.

SFI 2.2.5: Use of Pesticides banned under the Stockholm convention and Persistent Organic pollutants.

OFI: Although Pesticides are currently checked to the FSC checklist, there is an opportunity to improve the chemical review process, both internally and with external contractors, to ensure that current and future uses of pesticides that are banned under the Stockholm convention and Persistent Organic pollutants are not being used.

SFI 3.1.3: Monitoring of overall best management practices implementation.

OFI: The organization currently conducts BMP monitoring with written checklists. Different checklists are used in the Eastern Shore and the Western SFs. There is an opportunity to improve the similarity of criteria used in the West vs the Eastern Shore (example with the criteria for 1-5 verses Yes NO and NA noted) in order to help improve consistency of evaluation of BMP effectiveness.

SFI 8.2.1 *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.

OFI: Although the Chesapeake/Pocomoke Forest Citizens Advisory Committee member has been recently established, there is an opportunity to continue efforts and seek input from indigenous people, including all MD State Forest regions, as the last formal outreach efforts were completed 5-6 years ago and per interview, there is not a regularly scheduled interval to re-evaluate the MD DNR SF outreach efforts.

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

OFI: There is an opportunity to improve the assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities as it relates to contract requirements, per review of the Stone Mountain Road contract #0217. Internal contractual documents were incomplete on one page of the contract; per interview with multiple DNR staff, there were differing thoughts as to who was responsible for noting the official date and signature on the contract, i.e.: State Forest Staff vs. Central Office staff in Annapolis.

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

OFI: While the seed mix used on landings and roads has been previously approved by State Wildlife staff for food plots and for the Erosion and Sediment Control plan, there is an opportunity to improve staff education and training as it relates to the seed mixture (species and ratios) currently being applied on landings and roads, as only non-native, naturalized species are being used.

SFI 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.*

OFI: Currently the document "Internal Review-ISA-FIELD-CHECKLIST-ALL-SF- is used; there is an opportunity to consider using other foresters from different regions to help strengthen and improve current auditing processes.

There was/were 1 minor nonconformity(ies) identified.

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

Minor: This process is not fully effective.

Evidence: Contract logger is a MD Master Logger, however there were issues with the equipment on-site. Dozer was persistently leaking on site onto the soil below the equipment, some oil was observed on the soil below the Skidder. Logger was not on site. No apparent safety equipment (no fire extinguishers & spill kits observed on all 3 machines on an active site), however, later interview stated that the fire extinguishers were behind the seats of the skidder and harvester out of view. Recent BMP inspection conducted by forester noted no issues.

There was/were 0 major nonconformity(ies) identified.

Issues identified at previous audits reviewed for continued conformance.

3 Previous OFI identified from the last audit were reviewed and closed. Management plans were in process of being reviewed regarding accurately describing the status (ongoing vs. completed) of selected activities; Use of the trademark symbol (™) was reviewed for all documents and were updated; and organization had a workshop to help improve awareness of predicted climate change patterns and the impacts to wildlife and biodiversity for foresters.

Yes No N/A (not using) All logos and/or labels, including ANSI, ANAB, SFI, PEFC, ATFS, etc., are utilized correctly in accordance with NSF SOP 14680 and SOP 4876. If answering “No”, a finding of nonconformity should be issued.

For Recertification Audits:

Auditors are required to review the reports from all audits in the current certification period, starting with the certification or recertification audit and including all surveillance or other audits. The auditor shall consider the performance of the program over the cycle through a review of internal audits, management reviews, corrective actions, continual improvement, and NSF audit findings, to determine if there is evidence of:

- An effective interaction between all parts of the program and its overall effectiveness?
- An overall effectiveness of the system in its entirety in light of internal and external changes?
- A demonstrated commitment by top management to maintain the effectiveness and improvement of the system to enhance overall performance?
- Continual improvement over the cycle?
- The program contributing to the achievement of the client’s policy and objectives, and the intended results?
- Repeated audit findings during the audit cycle that would indicate systemic issues?

Answer: MD DNR has demonstrated effective implementation by having annual internal audits (2011-2010) and management reviews each fiscal year (2011 thru 2019). NSF auditor reviewed documented internal audits and management reviews over the audit cycle which demonstrated continual commitment by the organization. The organization over the life of the certificate addressed all internal/external findings including the recent external 3 OFIs issued by NSF in FY 2018. This demonstrates continual improvement. Leadership commitment was demonstrated during the field portion of the audit. The Annapolis Director /State Forester and Associate Director Forester have oversight and input into management system, were actively engaged in communications during a portion of this year’s NSF field audit. This interaction demonstrated leadership commitment and the willingness to contribute to meeting the MDNR objectives in forest certification.

F. Appendices

- [Appendix 1:](#) Audit Notification Letter and Audit Agenda
- [Appendix 2:](#) SFI Forest Management Public Summary Report
- [Appendix 3:](#) Audit Standard Checklist - SFI Forest Management Standard
- [Appendix 4:](#) Site Visit Notes
- [Appendix 5:](#) Meeting Attendance
- [Appendix 6:](#) Multi-site Checklist



Appendix 1

Audit Notification Letter

5 March 2019

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

RE: SFI® Forest Management Reassessment Audit, Maryland Forest Service

Dear Mr. Perdue,

As we discussed, I will be conducting your SFI® Forest Management audit as described in the attached itinerary. We previously confirmed that these dates are still appropriate for the audit of your program's continued conformance to the standards noted below:

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

We are scheduled to conduct the 2019 SFI® and FSC® Reassessment Audits of Maryland's state forest system the week of April 1st. This letter provides the SFI audit plan; the FSC audit plan has been provided by Michelle Matteo, SCS Lead Auditor.

The 2019 SFI Reassessment audit is a full review (all Objectives covered) of your SFI Program to confirm that it continues to be in conformance with the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard and that continual improvement is being made.

Preparing for the Audit

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

- Management Review records
- Documentation for subcontracting/outsourcing
- Documentation for multisite organization (if applicable)
- Policies regarding certification, health, and safety
- Forest Management Plans
- Contracts for harvesting and silvicultural activities
- Documentation for monitoring, non-conformances identified and corrective action
- Approval for logo usage (if used)
- Internal Audit records
- Training records, license, certifications
- Documentation for operation of complaint procedure

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

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 Forest Management number is NSF-SFI-FM-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 Hamilton, Coordinator, Office of Statistics and Label Use
Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc.
343-803-0590
rachel.hamilton@sfiprogram.org

Multi-Site Sampling Plan

Your responsibilities for Public Lands Stewardship include the role of “central administration” for this multi-site program. We will review the SFI multi-site requirements during the office time on April 5th.

The following sites are included in the overall scope: Chesapeake Forest Lands, Pocomoke State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest, Garrett State Forest, Potomac State Forest, and the Savage River State Forest. The 2019 audit will include 3 of these 6, as follows: Pocomoke State Forest, Chesapeake State Forest, and the Green Ridge State Forest. These forests were selected to include a broad cross-section of activities and of the sites and to facilitate travel. Random sampling was not employed in the selection of these 3 forests but will be used in the selection of sites to be visited.

Field Site Selection

Preliminary site selections included preparing a candidate site list of forest stands or areas harvested in the past 2 years with associated forestry environmental risk categories including FORI, RT&E, road construction, riparian areas, and other unique/special sites.

The NSF evaluation team will select an initial subset of sites for your certificate and will ask for supplemental information on these sites, including their accessibility and the likelihood of being actively harvested during the visit. Once we review this information, we will select a subsample of sites to visit.

Final site selection will occur during the opening meeting of the audit. On the opening day of the audit, we would ask you to tell us about any sales that are being worked at that time, and we would add one or two of these if possible. Staff should be prepared to review audit routes each morning.

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.

I look forward to visiting you and evaluating continual improvement in your SFI Program. Thank you for selecting NSF to provide your audit services.

Sincerely,

Keri Yankus

Keri Yankus

Senior Lead Auditor, NSF

603/340-1304

kyankus@nsf.org



Audit Agenda

Type of Audit

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Readiness Review (Stage 1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Registration (Stage 2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Surveillance |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reassessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer | <input type="checkbox"/> Verification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | |

Audit Objectives

Determine if certification should be renewed to the following Standards: SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules: Section 2, Forest Management

Logistics

SFI FM Audit: Evaluation dates of 2-5 April 2019

Travel: Auditors – Arrive Monday 4/1/19 at BWI

Depart BWI early on Saturday 4/6/19, stay at airport hotel Friday night.

Lodging: MD DNR to coordinate Monday night – Thursday lodging, they will inform auditors to make their own reservations

Meals: Plans should be made to have lunch onsite or another acceptable location to ensure timeliness. Other meals may not require the client's involvement.

Daily Travel: Travel will most likely occur in your vehicle(s) each day during the audit, but the evaluation team may have transportation to each field location at the start and end of each day.

Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Activity/Process and Location to be Audited	Auditor(s)
Tues. 2 April 2019	8:00 am	MD-DCR Office – Snow Hill Office Pocomoke State Forest (SF) & Chesapeake SF 6572 Snow Hill Rd, Snow Hill, MD Opening Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductions, Roles, and Audit Objectives Review Audit Procedures Discuss changes to the Facility Record Sheet (contact information, billing information, review scope, etc.) Emergency and safety procedures for evaluation team Agenda Review; determine interviewees Overview by your staff of program Discussion of corrective action requests / plans Overview of Logo or Label use Field Site Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predetermined initial list of sites used as a basis for selections Final site selections completed, including additional active sites where present 	Keri Yankus (KY) SFI Lead Auditor Michelle Matteo (MM) FSC Lead Auditor and SFI Team Auditor Ciara McCarthy (CM) FSC Team Auditor
	9:00 am	Field visits - Pocomoke SF and Chesapeake SF	
	4:30 pm	Daily briefing with auditors and DCR staff	



Day/Date	Time	Activity/Process and Location to be Audited	Auditor(s)
Wed. 3 April 2019	8:00 am	Office visit: Parker Forestry Services, contracted company for silvicultural work on Pocomoke & Chesapeake SF 1323 Mount Hermon Rd Ste 8b, Salisbury, MD	KY, MM, CM
	8:30 am	Field visits - Pocomoke SF Field visits - Chesapeake SF	
	4:30 pm	Daily wrap-up with auditors and DCR staff	
		Drive to Green Ridge	
Day/Date	Time	Activity/Process and Location to be Audited	Auditor(s)
Thu. 4 April 2019	8:00 am	Office – Abbreviated Green Ridge SF opening meeting 28700 Headquarters Dr NE, Flintstone, MD	KY, MM, CM
	8:30 am	Field visits – Green Ridge SF	
	4:30 pm	Daily briefing with auditors and DCR staff	
Day/Date	Time	Activity/Process and Location to be Audited	Auditor(s)
Fri. 5 April 2019	8:30 am	MD-DCR Office – Green Ridge SF Document and systems reviews, including management system review, staff interviews	MM, CM
	11:00 pm	Travel to Annapolis office for GIS, Central Office, and Closing Meeting 580 Taylor Ave, Annapolis, MD	
	12:30 pm	Document and systems reviews, including management system review, staff interviews Remaining Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of audit checklist • Prepare for closing meeting - Auditor(s) take time to consolidate notes and confirm audit findings 	
	4:00 pm	Closing Meeting: Review preliminary findings (potential non-conformities and opportunities for improvement) and discuss next steps	

** Audit conducted jointly with the FSC FM audit; times approximate and may vary.

Appendix 2

Maryland DNR Forest Service 2019 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, including the sustainable harvest level requirement (Performance Measure 1.1), according to the NSF SFI-FS Certification Audit Process.

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 to the current 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 SFI 2015-2019 Standards in April of 2014. The most recent audit was a complete recertification audit conducted April 2019.

The multi-site certificate covers 6 different State Forests (Chesapeake Forest, Pocomoke State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest, Garrett State Forest, Potomac State Forest, and Savage River State Forests) also including the central office located in Annapolis MD. The 2019 audit included office reviews in the following Chesapeake Forest, Pocomoke State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest, and the central office located in Annapolis, MD. Field visits were conducted in 3 out of a total of 6 State Forests. This sample size was determined using the guidelines set forth in IAF-MD1. The State Foresters were selected based on a date rotation of total 6 different Forests. Approximately half of the field sites visited were randomly sampled. Within the 3 selected forests NSF's lead auditor selected field sites for inspection based upon the risk of environmental impact, likelihood of occurrence, special features, and other criteria outlined in NSF's protocols and procedures. 2 field offices, 1 central office and 21 field sites were visited. The 21 field sites consisting of the 3 active timber harvests (hardwood 1st thinning, hardwood even aged, final harvest/clear cut and softwood 2nd thinning), 1 conversion softwood to hardwood, 5 recently closed sale with wildlife considerations, 2 with herbicide application with invasive species, 3 High Conservation Forest, 3 natural regenerations, 2 recreation sites, 2 inactive harvests, and 1 research site. There were also several roads, several smaller road-trail/stream crossings with cross drains and BMPs being applied. Harvest levels are documented in Annual Work Plans and have been at or below levels identified in plans for MD DNR associated inventory and growth data as well as harvest-related planning documents are used to ensure that plans include long term harvest level and consistent with the growth and yield model generated by the PGSF and SRSF. Data from the 5-year stand-level inventory project was used to develop a volume-control target based allowable harvest levels for western forests.

Maryland DNR Forest Service has an extensive program for harvest planning and approval. A Sustainable Forest Management Plan has been developed for each forest, and these plans are regularly updated. Harvests levels have been modeled by forest type for sustainability by area control for a 50-year planning horizon. Based on the Sustainable Forest Management Plan an Annual Work Plan is developed for each forest including planned harvests and other management activities. 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 2019 Recertification Audit which considered changes in operations, the management review system, and efforts at continuous improvement. All 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 Management Plan:

'The resources and values provided from state forests reach people throughout the State and beyond. These resources and values range from economic too aesthetic and from scientific too 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 2019 Recertification Audit was performed by NSF on April 2-5, 2019 by an audit team headed by Keri Yankus, Sr. Lead Auditor. Michelle Matteo was the Sr. FSC Lead Auditor and supported the NSF lead auditor for SFI. 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 2 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 activities of the central office were reviewed against the multi-site requirements as well.

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 the first week of April, 2020.

Overview of Audit Findings

Maryland's SFI Program demonstrated conformance against the SFI 2015-2019 Standard. There were one non-conformances 2019, and Seven "Opportunities for Improvement". As such, the program has earned continuing certification with the minor non-conformance.

Three OFI identified in the 2018 audit have been resolved:

1. Management plans were in process of being reviewed regarding accurately describing the status (ongoing vs. completed) of selected activities; SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, Indicator 1.1.1 requires "Forest management planning at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the operation".
2. Use of the trademark symbol (™) was reviewed for all documents and were updated; SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 5 Part 4, Indicator 4.2 trademark.
3. Organization had a workshop to help improve awareness of predicted climate change patterns and the impacts to wildlife and biodiversity for foresters; SFI Indicator 10.3.2 requires a "Program Participants are knowledgeable about climate change impacts on wildlife, wildlife habitats and conservation of biological diversity through international, national, regional or local programs."

There was one new Non-Conformance in the 2019 audit.

Contract logger is a MD Master Logger, however there were issues with the equipment on-site. Dozer was persistently leaking on site onto the soil below the equipment, some oil was observed on the soil below the Skidder. Logger was not on site. No apparent safety equipment (no fire extinguishers & spill kits observed on all 3 machines on an active site), however, later interview stated that the fire extinguishers were behind the seats of the skidder and harvester out of view. Recent BMP inspection conducted by forester noted no issues. This process is not fully effective for SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management, Indicator 11.1.4 Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.

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

Seven opportunities for improvement (OFI) were identified in the 2019 audit:

1. **SFI 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.

OFI: Regeneration criteria are forest-type specific. Confirmed that Western SFs use Oak-SILVAH for criteria and for protocols for regeneration surveys. No regeneration delays were observed in the field. Although planting is rarely done, there is an opportunity for improvement in the regeneration criteria in order to achieve acceptable species and stocking levels for naturally regenerating stands in the Eastern Region.

2. **SFI 2.2.5:** Use of Pesticides banned under the Stockholm convention and Persistent Organic pollutants.

OFI: Although Pesticides are currently checked against the FSC checklist, there is an opportunity to improve the chemical review process, both internally and with external contractors, to ensure that current and future uses of pesticides does not include pesticides banned under the Stockholm convention and Persistent Organic pollutants are not being used.

3. **SFI 3.1.3:** Monitoring of overall best management practices implementation.

OFI: The organization currently conducts BMP monitoring with written checklists. Different checklists are used in the Eastern Shore and the Western SFs. There is an opportunity to improve the difference in criteria used in the West vs the Eastern Shore (example with the criteria for 1-5 verses Yes NO and NA noted) in efforts to help improve consistency for evaluation of BMP effectiveness.

4. **SFI 8.2.1** *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.

OFI: Although the Chesapeake/Pocomoke Forest Citizens Advisory Committee member has been recently established, there is an opportunity to continue efforts and seek input from indigenous people, including all MD State Forest regions, as the last formal outreach efforts were completed 5-6 years ago and per interview, there is not a regularly scheduled interval to re-evaluate the MD DNR SF outreach efforts.

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

OFI: There is an opportunity to improve the assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities as it relates to contract requirements, per review of the Stone Mountain Road contract #0217. Internal contractual documents were incomplete on one page of the contract; per interview with multiple DNR staff, there were differing thoughts as to who was responsible for noting the official date and signature on the contract, i.e.: State Forest Staff vs. Central Office staff in Annapolis.

6. **SFI 11.1.3** *Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.*

OFI: While the seed mix used on landings and roads has been previously approved by State Wildlife staff for food plots and for the Erosion and Sediment Control plan, there is an opportunity to improve staff education and training as it relates to the seed mixture (species and ratios) currently being applied on landings and roads, as only non-native, naturalized species are being used.

7. **SFI 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.*

OFI: Currently the document "Internal Review-ISA-FIELD-CHECKLIST-ALL-SF- is used. There is an opportunity to consider using other foresters from different regions to help strength and improve current auditing processes.

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:

There was one area where the forestry program of Maryland DNR's Forest Service "Exceeds the Requirements":

- 1. The program exceeds the requirements for providing an exceptional range of high-quality recreational opportunities State Forests.
SFI Indicator 5.4.1 requires participants to "Provide recreational opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives."

General Description of Evidence of Conformity

NSF's audit team used a variety of evidence to determine conformance. The 2019 audit included office reviews in the following by the NSF audit team Chesapeake Forest, Pocomoke State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest, and the central office located in Annapolis, MD. Field visits were conducted in 3 out of a total of 6 State Forests. 2 field offices, 1 central office and 21 field sites were visited. The 21 field sites consisting of the 3 active timber harvests (hardwood 1st thinning, hardwood even aged, final harvest/clear cut and softwood 2nd thinning), 1 conversion softwood to hardwood, 5 recently closed sale with wildlife considerations, 2 with herbicide application with invasive species, 3 High Conservation Forest, 3 natural regenerations, 2 recreation sites, 2 inactive harvests, and 1 research site. There were also several roads, several smaller road-trail/stream crossings with cross drains and BMPs being applied.

A further description of the audit 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 Chesapeake, Pocomoke and Green Ridge and supporting documentation and the associated inventory data and growth analyses were the key evidence of conformance for western and southern forests.

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 including annual work plans and "State Forest Database" reports 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. Visited a HWA site and an active burn site using fire for a long term management tool.

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 close to water various types of water resources, (primary waterways, secondary streams and well defined vernal pools) generally riparian buffers, and confirmed that these buffers were flagged during planning, painted prior to harvests and noted for input into GIS.

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 sites were visited during the audit.

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 active and completed harvesting operations and policies/procedures for visual quality were assessed during the evaluation. NSF team visited recreation sites during the audit. NSF team also contacted various stakeholder seeking input and obtaining feedback on how the DNR balances public interests while providing various recreational opportunities.

Objective 6 Protection of Special Sites

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

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 participated in identification of special sites and participated during the NSF audit.

Objective 7 Efficient Use of Fiber Resources

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

Summary of Evidence: Field observations of recently completed operations, contract clauses, and discussions with supervising field foresters and with interview with a logger provided the key evidence.

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.

Objective 9 Legal and Regulatory Compliance

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

Summary of Evidence: Field and office reviews of ongoing and completed operations were the most critical evidence. Foresters are licensed and have access to legal and regulatory listing electronic and hard copy.

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, Wood rat biology, and a well as a major trial of a pesticide to control the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid which the NSF team visited.

Objective 11 Training and Education

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

Summary of Evidence: Review of training records, and the records of support for the Maryland Master Logger Program. Further all harvests are conducted by logging crews with one or more Maryland Master Loggers. Training was check for licensed foresters and also for applicators applying chemicals on the forests.

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: Records provided by the audited organization and interviews were used to confirm the requirements.

Objective 13 Public Land Management Responsibilities

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on public lands.

Summary of Evidence: The Citizen Advisory confirms the involvement with the public inputs does occur.

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

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Appendix 3

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

FRS# OY301 – Maryland DNR Forest Service

Date of audit(s): April 2-5, 2019

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: MD DNR made changes in the last year to ensure the use of the trademark symbol (TM) is used in documents when first using the initials SFI. Confirmed through document review.

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: Plans include maximum harvest levels based on inventory data and growth models.

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: The Western Maryland Sustainable Forest Management Plans had major updates (non-policy changes) since the 2018 audit and are available for downloading on the individual state forest websites. The Chesapeake Forest and Pocomoke State Forests plans are to be updated in 2019 to reflect recent DNR policies (WMD state forest plans were not affected) and will involve review and comments from the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT). This revision will also include acreage and zoning updates.

The Sustainable Forest Management Plans are reviewed and updated nearly every year, often as a result of audit findings.

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

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

Audit Notes: Harvest plans from recent years more accurately depict the extent of operable forestland and reserves in each harvest unit. Harvest plans incorporate the allowable harvest calculations.

Current harvest levels appear to be consistent with plans and with forest health maintenance.

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: Western forests: 2000 CFI data were supplemented by recently completed 5-year stand-level inventory project, which is analyzed using the Remsoft Spatial Woodstock model for the development of long-term projections on the state forests.

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: Managers and field staff discussed the emphasis placed on inventory work. Actual volumes are well below “allowable” volumes in part due to these differences, and in part due to fluctuating markets and limitations of logging and trucking capacity in the western versus southern areas.

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: Annual works plans are the primary tool for tracking, reporting, and making information available regarding implementation of forest practices.

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: The AWP and the ID Team ensure that the requirements are met. Conversions are driven by ecological considerations including restoring rare or under-represented cover types. Observed in the field that majority of harvests goals include maintaining composition within broadly-similar stand types, consistent with natural stand dynamics such as oak- maple western area and pine in southern.

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: The AWP and the ID Team ensure that the requirements are met. Conversions are driven by ecological considerations including restoring rare or under-represented cover types. See field notes



Performance Measure 1.3

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed through interviews and site visits that lands are not being converted to non-forest land use. The only conversion is for wildlife habitat and consultation occurs prior to the management being implemented in the field.

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: Forest Management plans provide direction; harvest prescriptions contain information regarding reforestation. Organizations harvest areas include a prescription for natural regeneration but the organization monitors and if needed planting does occur. Regeneration criteria are forest-type specific. Western-most two forests (SRSF and PGSF) use Oak-SILVAH for criteria and for protocols for regeneration surveys. No regeneration delays were observed.

ES: Viewed regen plot data for planted stands in western locations.

Western: Viewed regeneration plots for harvested units GR-05-12 & GR-01-13 (Summer 2017), Regen plot data viewed and the smaller plots that capture the herbaceous layer (26' plot, and 6' plot data viewed). Regeneration plots taken at year 4 or 5.

Regeneration criteria are forest-type specific. Confirmed that Western SFs use Oak-SILVAH for criteria and for protocols for regeneration surveys. No regeneration delays were observed in the field. Although planting is rare, there is an **opportunity for improvement** in the regeneration criteria in order to achieve acceptable species and stocking levels for naturally regenerating stands in the Eastern Region.

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

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

Audit Notes: Regeneration criteria are forest-type specific. Confirmed that Western SFs use Oak-SILVAH for criteria and for protocols for regeneration surveys. No regeneration delays were observed in the field. See also 2.1.1 above. Individual stand prescriptions and visual walk through 3 to 5 years before harvest are also used. If there is not enough natural regeneration observed, then a plan is formulated with appropriate actions taken with planting of local nursery tree stock.

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: Western forests rarely plant, and normally only to meet wildlife habitat objectives. Native species are used.

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: Observed on several active harvests in different regions that contractor and MD DNR foresters protected desirable or planned natural hardwood and also softwood regeneration during the active harvests.

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: Confirmed through interviews and observations that AWP and ID Team processes ensure that any treatment designed to change species composition is designed and reviewed by a team with expertise in forestry, ecology, botany, and other skills as needed.

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: Forest chemicals are applied only as needed, and generally to control or set-back understory vegetation hindering natural regeneration or to control invasive, exotic plants. Interview's and observations on the Furnace Restoration project confirm that hack and squirt was used and minimal chemical was used to achieve the management object. Reviewed the chemical log kept in the Foresters garage for Pocomoke SF Forest.

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: Some treatments used Glyphosate, which is accepted as one of the "least-Toxic" herbicides.

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: Trained foresters prescribe chemicals which are applied by trained applicators, and both parties check to ensure the uses align with label requirements. Interviewed licensed foresters on the Pocomoke SF, Chesapeake SF and Green Ridge SF.

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: Confirmed chemicals used (glyphosate, Triclopyr, Imazapyr, or sulfometuron methyl) are not on prohibited list.

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: Confirmed chemicals used (glyphosate, Triclopyr, Imazapyr, or sulfometuron methyl) are not on prohibited list.
OFI: Although Pesticides are currently checked against the FSC checklist, there is an **opportunity to improve** the chemical review process, both internally and with external contractors, to ensure that current and future uses of pesticides that are banned under the Stockholm convention and Persistent Organic pollutants are not being used.

2.2.6 Use of *integrated pest management* where feasible.

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

Audit Notes: Reviewed document:11C Savage River State Forest MD DNR "Notification for electrical utility vegetation maintenance work on DNR lands" dated 2-5-19. Interviews and documentation show that chemicals are only applied after careful site analysis, development of a prescription, ID review, and by trained applicators. The treatment area is provided to the applicator on printed maps supplemented by GIS data (.shp file). The contractor provides GIS data showing "spray on" flight lines of the treatment area.

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: Reviewed document:11C Savage River State Forest MD DNR "Notification for electrical utility vegetation maintenance work on DNR lands" dated 2-5-19. This document lists the chemicals used on project, standard herbicide mixtures (page 3 of 6), and legal requirements noted (page 2 of 6). Confirmed MD DNR Forester and Forest Technicians hold current state-issued cards for Licensed Applicators in Pocomoke SF and Chesapeake SF. Confirmed that the aerial applicator holds a valid MD applicators license.

- 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: Pocomoke SF Forest interviews, review of SDS sheets and labels, and inspection of chemical storage shed confirmed a, c, d, h, i, and j. Confirmed through interviews all forests use ID Team to review, modify as needed, and approve all treatments including proposed chemical applications, ensuring d, g, and j.

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: GIS data layer is checked with NRCS published soils maps and used in forest management activities.

- 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: Active field sites visited confirmed that various levels of erosion control measures were used including for example, water bars, cross drains, bridge installment, or corduroy of wet areas to minimize loss of soil and site productivity.

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed by field observations that post-harvest conditions reflect efforts to maintain site productivity.

- 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: Confirmed by field observations that vigorous trees during various harvesting regimes were being retained.

- 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: Confirmed by field observations at various active sites visited that soil productivity was being protected in site preparation.

- 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: Auditors reviewed many road segments which have been recently upgraded on the Pocomoke SF and Chesapeake SF to improve access. For example, skid trails were laid out by consulting forester and MD DNR forests to minimize impacts to the soil productivity. See field notes.



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: Reviewed the MD Department of Agriculture Forest Pest Management Schedule for treatment of Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. NSF team visited in the field HWA site, see field notes. Emerald Ash Borer presence is being monitored. Staff is aware of the potential impact of EAB in the ash cover type.

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: Confirmed by field observations that foresters are managing for forest condition and looking to minimize susceptibility to damaging agents.

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: NSF auditor observed an active prescribed fire in progress. MD DNR foresters are actively participating in pest prevention program with HWA. Many state forest workers are trained as wild fire fighters; confirmed training and observed firefighting equipment in use. See field notes.

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: Few trees are planted on the western state forests. Trees planted in the eastern forests are sourced from providers which use scientific protocols.

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: Foresters and contractors followed legal requirements and implement BMPs as needed. See also field notes.

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: Reviewed several **Attachment C** Compliance Agreement for the Standard Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for Forest Operations.” See field notes. The standard provision in contracts is:

7. Sediment and Erosion Control. The Buyer shall be responsible for complying with all sediment and erosion control measures required by Title 4, Subtitle 1 of the Environment Article of The Annotated Code of Maryland. To that end the Buyer must have filled out and returned to (DNR Representative) Attachment C "Standard Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for Forest Harvest Operations" (hereinafter referred to as "Sediment Plan") prior to commencing any harvest activities. Failure to do so will render this Agreement voidable. The Sediment Plan is hereby expressly incorporated into this Agreement and compliance with it is required.

3.1.3 Monitoring of overall *best management practices* implementation.

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

Audit Notes: Consulting foresters and DNR Foresters monitor use of BMPs. For example, S49 Saltz Powell Track Stands 6 & 1034 (overseen by Parker Forestry), confirmed Forest Harvesting Operating Harvest site (12/12/18) includes BMP monitoring. Once a week the BMP monitoring inspections occur. Topics covered on the inspection forms include: landing, skid trails, safety, visual, stocking, and other items like trash.

Pre-harvest checklist reviewed (9/20/18). **O.F.I.**: The organization currently conducts BMP monitoring with written checklists. Different checklists are used in the Eastern Shore and the Western SFs. There is an opportunity to improve the similarity of criteria used in the West vs the Eastern Shore (example with the criteria for 1-5 verses Yes NO and NA noted) in order to help improve consistency of evaluation of BMP effectiveness.

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: Confirmed that Consulting foresters and MD DNR forests documents show mapping of rivers, streams, lakes, and other water bodies and are entered into GIS databases and timber sale maps. The riparian buffers (and other buffers for visual management or to protect steep areas or draws/dry ravines) were flagged during layout and then painted when layout is finalized; this was clearly observed in the field. See field notes.



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: Observed during field visits; harvest plans include mapped water bodies.

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: Harvest plans incorporate protection of various water bodies. Observed where public water supply was protected for greater D.C. metro area. See field notes.

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: Wet weather operations covered in Policy and Procedures Handbook for Western MD (3/27/2019 page7). Foresters have identified wet weather tracts in each forest visited.

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: Field sites visited included sites where foresters incorporate wildlife habitats considerations, including for example items recognized on the Natural Heritage data base.

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: Active and inactive field sites visited in multiple regions; observed snags, stumps, mast trees, down woody debris, and den trees were being left and in order to implement the agency goals.

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: Confirmed some RSAs are present in the Forests that were visited. Confirmed in Forest Management Plan.

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: Foresters are aware of the state-wide plan and some foresters incorporate the results of State Wildlife Action Plan information (such as the species assessments) into the initial phases of the management plan process. Interviews confirmed that consultant foresters and MD DNR are aware of the state wildlife action plan.

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: Forester described process for investigating occurrences:

- Checked for and found occurrence on GIS layer.
- Look up guidance and descriptions.
- Analyzed and evaluated site potential for actual occurrences.
- Foresters work with the natural heritage; confirmed through interviews.

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: Parker Forestry communicated to the auditors that when they recon for forestry operations, the Forester observed 3 distinct Vernal Pools on site and protected them with flagging and buffers, took GPS points and reported to the MD DNR office. NSF auditors visited 2 out of the 3 vernal pools. Hunting stand in one vernal pool and a deer feeding station in the other. Discussions occurred that MD DNR has an active hunting club lease at this location and long-term monitoring. See field notes.

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: Demonstrated management of an invasive species such as HWA. See field notes.

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: Observed on the Foster Tract Prescribed Burn, 30-acre active burn in progress on an early successional ESA.

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: **Potomac Bends Wildland Area (PBWA)** - 10,000 acres of HCVF is delineated; 6,000 acres is designated for RSA. Key species noted include the Alleghany wood rat, (state listed species), Kate’s Mountain Clover, Small River Bat and Small Footed Bat. Tree species noted include Red Cedar, Yellow Oak, Post Oak, Scrub Oak and Buckthorn (some of these species are found on the Shale Barrens). This is habitat for the Pine Warbler (nesting).

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: Foresters check the Natural Heritage data base and protect threatened and endangered species.

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: Confirmed with observations and document review that some forests have a separate map or listing capturing possible old-growth forests within the state land ownership.

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: Delmarva Fox Squirrel Habitat needs old growth; field discussions occurred with Natural Heritage representative.- HCVF, mature loblolly pine to be removed to promote mature pond pine and future DFS habitat (Watershed/Oak Hickory Pond Pine with short leaf but no loblolly pine). Discussion on old growth issues. Retention of mixed species.

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: Reviewed documented procedures: "Methodology for Locating Representative Sample Areas (RSA) for Naturally Occurring Ecosystems within the Region of Maryland State Forests April 2012".

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: Monitoring and Inventory by Natural Heritage Program Staff on State Forests in 2019

Chesapeake Forest Lands

- *Minuartia caroliniana* annual monitoring @ Campbell Complex
- Surveys for *Rhynchosia tomentosa*, *Centrosema virginianum*, *Lupine perennis* and *Tephrosia spicata* @ Marshyhope Sand Ridge Complex
- Post burn surveys for RTEs @ Marshyhope Sand Ridge Complex
- Intertidal RTE recon along Marshyhope Creek @ Marshyhope Sand Ridge Complex
- Rare natural community recon for Atlantic white cedar and wet oaks west of Dublin Swamp
- Rare natural community recon for Atlantic white cedar @ Wango Pines
- Various RTE and rare natural community recon south of Sharptown
- De novo surveys of burn units, surveys and eo updates for *Rhynchosia tomentosa*, *Lupinus perennis* (4 days)

Pocomoke State Forest

- Surveys and RTE mapping for *Leersia lenticularia*, *Viola esculenta*, and *Cardamine longii* @ Porters Crossing
- Post burn surveys for RTE @ Furnace dune
- Surveys and monitoring for *Matelea* and *Rhynchosia tomentosa*, *Viola esculenta*, and several species of grasses for a total of 3 days.
- Survey of frosted elfin (*Callophrys irus*) (5 days)
- Monitoring of *Lupinus perennis* (2days)
- Survey of all native bees (5 days)
- Survey of great purple hairstreak (*Altides halesus*) (1 day)

Green Ridge State Forest

- Surveys and monitoring for *Prunus alleghaniensis*, *Trifolium virginicum*, several species of orchids and several species of SAV (7 days)
- Survey of all bee species, with emphasis on RTE species (4 days)
- Monitored Wood turtle (*Clemmys insculpta* - rare) populations in Town Creek and Fifteen Mile Creek. (Ed Thompson)

- Monitored shale barren communities and associated RTE species at Big Divide Run Barren, Railroad Hollow Shale Barren and Maple Run Shale Barren (Ed Thompson, Dan Feller)
- Monitored Boyer Knob Old Growth forest stand. (Ed Thompson and Dan Feller)
- Monitored bat populations through moving acoustic route recording - annual research project since 2010. (Dr. Ed Gates/Juliet Nagel/Dan Feller)

Savage River State Forest

- Survey of frosted elfin (*Callophrys irus*) (1 day)
- Allegheny woodrat (*Neotoma magister* - state endangered) population mark/recapture live trap monitoring, rattlesnake, and RTE breeding bird monitoring at High Rock (annual research activity since 1990).
- Allegheny woodrat latrine/midden survey at Coleman Hollow, Meadow Mt. Rocks, Bobcat Rocks.
- Monitored West Virginia white (*Pieris virginiensis* - state rare) butterfly population at a site along the upper Savage River.
- Monitored Fraser's sedge (*Carex fraseriana* - state endangered), Filmy angelica (*Angelica triquinata* - state endangered), and rose twisted-stalk (*Streptopus lanceolatus* - state threatened) in Savage Ravines Wildland.
- Monitored bat populations through moving acoustic route recording - annual research project since 2010. (Dr. Ed Gates/Juliet Nagel/Dan Feller)
- Monitored Coleman Hollow/South Savage Old Growth forest stands.

Potomac-Garrett State Forest

- Monitored Franz's cave amphipod (*Stygobromus franzi* - state in need of conservation), Allegheny spring isopod (*Caecidotea alleghenyensis* - state endangered), and a planaria (*Procotyla typhlops* - state endangered) at Mellot Rd. Spring Complex.
- Monitored bat populations through stationary acoustic recorders at Garrett State Forest. (Dr. Ed Gates/Ben Neece/Dan Feller)
- Allegheny woodrat latrine/midden survey at Lostland Run rocks and Backbone Mt. Wildland.
- Monitored Wild bleeding heart (*Dicentra eximia* - state threatened) population at Backbone Mt. Wildland.

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: **Furnace Tract Restoration project**, 5 acres intensively managed sand dune site with listed species. Discussion of the Frosted Elfin Butterfly. See field notes.



Objective 5 Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits

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

Performance Measure 5.1

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

5.1.1 Program to address visual quality management.

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

Audit Notes: Variable retention technique considers aesthetics when deciding on location of clumped retention. Confirmed: MFS Policy & Procedure Manual section on "Visual Quality. Site visits did not identify any visual quality concerns.

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: Field observations confirmed that there are aesthetic considerations in harvesting, road and landing design. Recreational management includes visual considerations. The MD DNR has established and incorporated aesthetic considerations into various aspects of planning and management activities (harvesting, and landing design) to minimize visual impacts or concerns.

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: Visited several sites that were final harvest/clearcut sites where the average size was 29 ac. or less.

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: Documented in regions and the information is then part of the annual report for SFI.

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: Field observations confirmed that adjacency and green-up requirements are met. GIS and planning system ensures that adjacent stands are not harvested.

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: Internal documentation for tracking that green up requirements are being met. GIS tracks planned and completed harvests.

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: The recent final harvest/clear cut observed included ample stocking levels including adjacent recently harvested areas. Confirmed that maps have the polygons mapped showing the amount of acreage and age class next to recent final harvests.



Performance Measure 5.4

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

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

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

Audit Notes: The MD DNR program exceeds the requirements for providing an exceptional range of high-quality recreational opportunities State Forests. At each forest visited auditors observed numerous well-designed and maintained trails, campsites, recreation site parking areas, information signs, and kiosks. Driving Tour included Green Ridge State Forest.

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: Stake holder consultation in identifying or selecting special sites for protection is noted in the on-line data base.
See field notes.

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

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

Audit Notes: Review of plans and 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: Confirmed by field site observations of active harvests that utilization is generally good, including efforts to separate saw logs, pulpwood, firewood by the contractor. All loggers must be Master Logger Certified. Logging contracts include provisions for utilization. Utilization may be customized for a site based on forester’s decisions; most are standardized. Contract Attachment D, DNR Timber Sale Contract No. PG-05-15 “5. Utilization – All timber must be removed to a 4” top except where it is impossible to secure an 8’ log.”



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: Briefly reviewed in the forest management plans.

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: The Nanticoke are based in Delaware. The Accohannock are based on the Maryland Eastern Shore. **OFI:** Although the Chesapeake/Pocomoke Forest Citizens Advisory Committee member has been recently established, there is an opportunity to continue efforts and seek input from indigenous people, including all MD State Forest regions, as the last formal outreach efforts were completed 5-6 years ago and per interview, there is not a regularly scheduled interval to re-evaluate the MD DNR SF outreach efforts.

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: This program does not manage private lands.

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

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

Audit Notes: This program does not manage private lands.

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: Foresters confirmed they have access to relevant laws and regulations in the organization's internal web page for their reference or Manual on book shelves (Parker Forestry). Observed field offices visited had Federal, State laws and regulations posted.

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: Chemicals stored with labeling and SDS. Foresters' reports track usage to ensure compliance with federal, state and local laws and regulations as it relates to chemical management. Field visits on active harvests confirmed necessary permits.

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: Confirmed through field visits that organization is committed to legal compliance and BMPs.

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: Field observations confirmed numerous posters posted in each MD DNR State office and consulting office visited. including for example: EEO, anti-harassment and anti-discrimination, right to know, workers right to organize, and OSHA .

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: Through interviews confirmed Annapolis Director/State Forester and Associate Director/Forester that there were no known ILO complaints.

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: Green Ridge State forest has on-going HWA research. See field notes.

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

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

Audit Notes: Maryland DNR Forest Service does not participate in research on genetically engineered trees.

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: Economic Benefit Assessment: Frostburg University is conducting a study of the economic impact of the recreational activities on the western Maryland state forests, including efforts to determine uses, demographic information about users, and how this impacts the local economies. Grant funding is from the Appalachian Regional Commission (rural-oriented, multi-state) and the Maryland Heritage Organization. Forest managers support the survey collection and polling, including office staff involvement in promoting completion of questionnaires.

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: Forest Resource planning forester monitors such information.



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: FY 2019 - organization had a workshop for foresters to help improve awareness of predicted climate change patterns and the impacts to wildlife and biodiversity. Confirmed through field interviews. See field notes.

Objective 11 Training and Education

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

Performance Measure 11.1

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Western MD State Forest Policies and Procedures. Page 4; document dated March 27, 2019.

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: Field interviews confirmed that foresters for the most part understand roles and responsibilities. Confirmed documented MD Forest Service Organization chart signed May 2016 by the Director/State Forester. **OFI:** There is an opportunity to improve the assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities as it relates to contract requirements, per review of the Stone Mountain Road contract #0217. Internal contractual documents were incomplete on one page of the contract; per interview with multiple DNR staff, there were differing thoughts as to who was responsible for noting the official date and signature on the contract, i.e.: State Forest Staff vs. Central Office staff in Annapolis.

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: FY 2019 Webinar/Training:

Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Patricia Leopold Climate Change Outreach Specialist Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science (NIACS).

OFI: While the seed mix used on landings and roads has been previously approved by State Wildlife staff for food plots and for the Erosion and Sediment Control plan, there is an opportunity to improve staff education and training as it relates to the seed mixture (species and ratios) currently being applied on landings and roads, as only non-native, naturalized species are being used.

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: Interviewed contractors on active sale and they were current with MD Master Logger.

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: Reviewed agreements. See field notes.

Performance Measure 11.2

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Called the State SIC during the NSF audit and confirmed that MD DNR mostly involved in the state SIC however this past year the MD DNR did not attend the annual meeting.

Reviewed documented information:

“MD DNR Director, Don VanHassent, is copied on all SIC emails, and if Kenneth cannot attend, and if the SIC business that is being discussed requires direct input from the DNR at the meeting, Don can attend, or if Don is unavailable, Kenneth can ask Jack to attend. I.e., if it is critical that a DNR representative be physically present for the meeting, we can make that happen. Typically, if Kenneth can’t make the meeting (which is very rare), the SIC Chair will simply contact me via email or phone following the meeting with any DNR-related issues. Most SIC Meetings cover “routine business” so the need for a DNR Staff person to be physically present is not usually critical.” Per email 4-5-19.

- 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: To gain Active Master Logger status, program participants must initially complete 4 four-hour core courses within two years, and submit proof of current First Aid and CPR training.

The four core courses are:

- OSHA Regulations and Logging Safety
- Sustainable Forestry I: Sediment and Erosion Control, Spill Cleanup and Prevention, Logging Aesthetics
- Sustainable Forestry II: Basic Forestry and Silviculture, Forest Certification
- Sustainable Forestry III: Threatened and Endangered Species, Logger Activism

Regular updates are also required.

- 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: There is no logger certification program in Maryland; the Maryland Master Logger Program fits the description under 11.2.1 above.

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: Ken Jolly is MFS rep on the SIC. Confirmed monetary support to the SIC.

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: Confirmed through field interviews.

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: Program Open Space – provides financial and technical assistance to local subdivisions for the planning, acquisition, and/or development of recreation land or open space areas. Established under the Department of Natural Resources in 1969, Program Open Space symbolizes Maryland's long-term commitment to conserving our natural resources while providing exceptional outdoor recreation opportunities for our citizens. Today more than 6,200 park and conservation area projects have been assisted through Program Open Space Local grant.

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/land/Pages/ProgramOpenSpace/home.aspx>

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: Confirmed that different Forestry staff cover a) b) and d) throughout the year.

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: MD SIC is a small group; currently there is no toll-free number but the committee would address concerns if there was an issue on MD DNR foresters, confirmed through phone interview.

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: Checked and no known complaints on the MD DNR.

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: Board of Public Works - DNR timber sales directive. The sale of forest products is ultimately approved by the Maryland Board of Public Works (incl. Governor, Comptroller, Treasurer). Sale valued at less than \$50,000 has been delegated to the DNR.

The Timber Operations Order directs our timber sale process which includes the 3-step review process:

1. Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) (III-D-2-a-4)
2. Citizens Advisory Committee (III-D-2-a-9 through 11), and
3. 30-day public review process (III-D-2-a-11)

Environmental Review Policy - This process guides internal/external activities (e.g. research, special events, construction, state forests activities outside of the annual work plan development, including easements, emergency timber sales) on DNR lands.

- Purpose: To establish a consistent, coordinated procedure for internal review of proposed projects and actions that affect the responsibilities of various units of the Department of Natural Resources in protecting, enhancing and providing for balanced use of the Natural Resources of the State.
- State Forest management plans include some documented information about other governmental entities.

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: Pocomoke State Forest and Chesapeake Forest Lands Citizens Advisory Committee members.

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 description of the audit process, *objectives* and scope;
 - a description of substitute *indicators*, if any, used in the audit and a rationale for each;
 - the name of *Program Participant* that was audited, including its *SFI* representative;
 - a general description of the *Program Participant's* forestland included in the audit;
 - 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*);
 - the dates the audit was conducted and completed;
 - 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
 - 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: These reports contain the required information and are posted on the SFI Inc. website (www.sfiprogram.org):

- April 2014 Re-certification Audit Maryland NSF-ISR
- April 2017 Surveillance Audit - FM Maryland NSF-ISR
- April 2018 Surveillance Audit – FM Maryland NSF-ISR

Performance Measure 14.2

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed that the MD DNR annually responds and files the SFI Inc. annual progress report survey.

-
- 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: Record keeping is kept in hard copy and electronic format in order to provide documented evidence to the SFI annual progress report surveys.

-
- 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 report FY 2018.

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: 2019: 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. See field notes.

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: Interviews confirmed that each area participated in the internal audits and Annapolis Director/State Forester and Associate Director have oversight and input into management system along with the state forester conducting the internal audits (March 12,13,14,20, 2019). Internal Review-ISA-FIELD-CHECKLIST-ALL-SF-2019 reviewed. **OFI:** Currently the document "Internal Review-ISA-FIELD-CHECKLIST-ALL-SF- is used; there is an opportunity to consider using other foresters from different regions to help strengthen and improve current auditing processes.

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: Interviews confirmed that each area participated in the internal audits and Annapolis Director/State Forester and Associate Director have oversight and input into management system along with the state forester conducting the internal audits (March 12,13,14,20, 2019). The "State Forest Managers Meeting on September 12, 2018 attended by the leadership team, central office staff, district foresters, and state forester managers included topics comprising the management review. Some topics covered include the following: Bee grants, Sustainable Forest Management Plan updates, Internal audits.. New Topics noted on documented evidence included the following: 1. Two Step Method contract 2. SFMP revisions 3. Forest certification, a. 2018 audit summary b. review of certification system requirements and compliance 4. FSC pesticides a. Glyphosate CAS Number 1071-83-6 FSC restricted list 5. Climate change summary 6. New timber sale contracts - web page 7. Next SFM meeting – Wednesday, March TDB, 8. State Forests Internal Silvicultural Audit – GR (3/12) PG (3/13) SR (3/14) ES (3/20) 9. Next audit – Week of April 1 – Eastern & Western MD.

(End SFI Forest Management Checklist)

Appendix 4**Field Notes****Tuesday, 2 April 2019**

Chesapeake/Pocomoke SF Field Office - checked chemicals used. Appropriate signage noted outside the building, building locked and chemicals were stored in a locked wooden box. Primary chemicals have the manufacturer labels on them. Secondary containers had name of the chemical with a black marker thus incomplete labeling of secondary containment. Discussions occurred on GHS/training of foresters and the conversion from MSDS to SDS sheets for chemicals used. The MD DNR forester provided an ongoing listing of documented quantities noted in the certification matrix.

Field Stop #1: P-20-5-01/02

48.2 acres – Mature Pine from 1921 to 1924

Delmarva Fox Squirrel Habitat needs old growth, field discussions occurred- Natural Heritage representative- HCVF, mature loblolly pine to be removed to promote mature pond pine and future DFS habitat (Watershed/Oak Hickory Pond Pine with short leaf but no loblolly pine). Discussion on old growth issues- Retention of mixed species. Discussion occurred on site with regards to climate change and the possible impacts to wildlife like the Delmarva Fox Squirrel (DFS).

Stop #1A

Walked the existing trail to a stream crossing. The trail is used for recreation including hunters. Walked to unmapped buffer with discussion of buffers and Hardwood Bottomland Silvicultural. The Organization would leave a 50-foot buffer. Observed a well-maintained gate, and trash (kid's bunny, old crab and cans were left as trash). DNR Forester picked up the trash and put in the pickup truck for removal. Discussion occurred on invasive species in the field including Bittersweet, Japanese Knot weed, none observed at the stop.

Stop #1B: P-02- tract 5 stand 25

35-acre future harvest, currently no markets - Discussion on Emerald Ash Border status and how the MD DNR gets funding through USFS grants.

Stop#2: Forest Health Monitoring, Ecological issues

Topics covered included invasive plants, climate change, and hydrology. The MD DNR is in process of updating the Forest Action Plan. MD DNR foresters take invasive plant training; summer/temporary employee hires take training which is a required video.

Stop #3: S49 Saltz Powell Track Stands 6 & 1034

Management over seen by Parker Forestry. 1st thinning. 100 acres. Recently completed job. Gatewood site. Pine. Logger company is BP Single Forestry, MD Master Logger. Equipment was a simple skidder with loader and 2 slashers. Activity started on the site 9-20-2018 through 10-18-2018. It was a long drag (skid) for the operator to the primary landing. Due to distance it was stopped and re started again 11/28/2018 to 12/18/2018. 103.4 acres were harvested as a 1st thinning. Per the management plan, this area is projected for a 2nd thinning.

Reviewed the Erosion & Sediment Control Compliance Agreement for the Standard Erosion and Sediment control plan. Confirmed that wooden mats used on the logging operations help minimize soil impacts and residual damage to standing trees. Site is predominately Loblolly Pine. Logger is a MD Master logger. Pulpwood was 6,000 tons removed for utilization. Confirmed BMP logging monitoring inspection sheet completed by Parker Forestry (Forest Harvesting Operating Harvest site 12/12/18). Once a week the BMP monitoring inspections occur. Topics covered on the inspection forms include landing, skid trails, safety, visual, stocking, and other items like trash.

Pre harvesting checklist reviewed 9/20/18. Walked several skid trails, no rutting noted, minimal residual damage, stump height low and noted a deer stand in tree. This site has an active lease to hunting club. Confirmed records of the hunting club at this site. Walked to the blue flagging and NSF noted unclear boundary line for the state adjacent to a private landowner. Discussion occurred on residual stand damage on one tree observed mid-way up trunk, however for significance it has to be 5% of the overall stand for foresters to consider it an issue. Discussions occurred on visual aesthetic considerations, adjacent land owner considerations and if the current survey/deed shows where boundary lines where. Confirmed through Parker Forestry Forester that documented deeds were reviewed and it was unclear of the boundary. Therefore, the forester moved the harvest boundary in 50 feet off the ditch line behind private property. See information in the SFI matrix.

Stop #4: Marumsco Tract Stands 1,3,7, 10 & 11

79.3 acres – Observed road work had been performed for access to the site. Silvicultural Prescription was final harvest and thinning. Several harvests from 4 different Work Plans. The stone laid for road improvement was clean limestone from PA. Walked the final harvest (clear cut) to the ditch (wet area) where the logger crossed using bridge mats that were pulled. Some tree retention noted. BPS Forestry moved out on 12/19/18 because tract got too wet. Retention of hardwood mast species noted. Observed several down trees piled together for the logger to come back in and pull out. Currently saw load at the deck/landing and 11 loads of wood were removed from the site.

Reviewed BMP monitoring form dated 1-4-2019. Forester noted a correction action due to very wet tract getting worse on the main haul and skid trails and rain was coming. Operations stopped. Reviewed other BMP monitoring forms 1-2-19, 12-28-18 and 10-16/18. No issues. During recon forester observed bricks (possible remnants of a homestead). Forester flagged a buffer around to protect during the harvest. It was GPS documented and provided to the MD DNR to add to the data layer. No stream crossings.

Stop #4A: Marumsco S55

NSF auditor walked into the stand to see current condition for future harvest. Previous rutting occurred on site, however the ditch and berm protected the primary stream. Noted that boundaries were well-marked and maintained. No issues.

Confirmed through interviews with state forester and assistant state forester that acoustic Bat studies are happening on all 3 forests.

Stop #5: Complex WR35-2 Hancock Track #3757

Gatewood job. Reviewed the 2017 work plan of 27 acres. Contains HCVF. Reviewed the Erosion Control plan. First Thinning. 26.7 acres. B.P Singles Forestry LLC out of Salisbury MD. MD Master Logger. Objective: thin to 70 sq. foot, retain hardwood mast species. Harvest crossed powerline. Viewed HCVF 50-foot buffer.

BMP monitoring forms checked 7/19/18, 10-12-18, 7-10-18. Harvested 46 tons per acre. Off of St. Paul Road.

Stop #5A: Logger Interview: Hancock

Confirmed Master Logger #338. Certified since 2018 and expires 12/31/2020. Confirmed the Forest Products card. 3 on the crew. Feller Buncher and 3 knuckle booms. Changes in the field would be communicated to the Parker Forestry forester. Logger communicated that he noticed an eagle on the ground at the Salts and the MD DNR was notified. Logger had PPE, and a spill kit in the back of the truck. Topics covered, internal communication of boundary lines, harvesting layout and design, landing placement and size, and BMP topics. Logger did not have a MD BMP Manual available in the pickup truck. No issues.

Stop #6: WR 29 Milton Barnes Stand

39.5 acres. Power line runs through the stand #1. HCVF stream buffer. Observed that buffers were maintained. Landing and skid trails. Snags were mapped and put into the MD DNR data base. Checked documented information: BMP check conducted on 3/12/2017. No issues noted.

Wednesday, 3 April 2019**Stop #1: Furnace Tract Restoration project**

5-acre intensively managed sand dune site with listed species. Discussion on the Frosted Elfin Butterfly. MD state endangered and Federally listed (Frosted Elfin uses same habitat as the Karner Blue Butterfly). No fire was used in the 1st section because the site was relatively open with 30% Tree cover. Lupine is the host plant that is being managed. Female butterfly lays eggs on the buds of the lupine and potentially wild indigo plants. MD DNR identified that deer were eating the Lupine Flowers thus an electric fence was installed as a deterrent. It was also a deterrent for turkey that have been noted on the site. Observed a mosaic grid system set up for sampling. Forester used the hack and squirt and cut stump treatment methods using Garlon as the chemical of choice for tree removal. Volunteers are supervised by a MD DNR forester to perform these functions. 1,000 acres are all contiguous with the Pocomoke SF stands (Field with mixed hardwoods). This is in an ESA zone 1. We walked the trail system set up to the special habitat with signage. Access is gated. Fire was used as a tool to help with management of the site. Covered the necessary fire trainings needed. See SFI Matrix. Discussion on Federal Aid for the Pollinator Diversity Grant currently in progress (Xeric habitat and pollinator diversity, covering bee species richness and plant surveys). No issues noted.

Stop #2: Foster Tract Prescribed Burn

30-acre active burn in progress on an early successional ESA. Observations of signage for 'smoke' and 'access restricted' to the site. Met the MD Forest Service Burn Boss, Gilbert Wagner. Reviewed the burn plan and the smoke management plan. 1 mile and 5 miles noted out on the map attached to the burn plan. Observed fire breaks and the emergency evacuation routes noted. External communications to the community/neighbors was noted along with interagency organizations. Observed staging of various

equipment (none leaking, spill kits present), PPE being worn by those participating in the active burn. No issues noted. Training was discussed Red Card and various levels of MD DNR training, see the SFI Matrix. Hack & Squirt last fall completed on the site, in preparation of the Rx burn. Jason Harrison, DNR Community Ecologist, works with Gilbert when prescribed burns are performed on ESAs.

Stop #3: MD DNR office

Review of additional documentation at the Snow Hill Office. See SFI matrix for notes.

Stop # 4: Complex S19 Freetown, CF-15-19, Stand 6

30-acre 1st thinning in loblolly pine completed in Oct 2018. Thinned down to 70 sq. ft BA. BMP forms viewed, no issues noted or observed. Skidding was located in an unconventional pattern along edge of stand, bump trees used at corners and removed at end of harvest. Well flagged, low residual damage, roadside log deck. Discussion of Southern Pine Beetle and Gypsy moth.

Stop #4A: Sub-contractor is Eastern Shore Forest Products to Jason Mitchell Forestry

2017 - 69 tons per acre thinned. Current MD Master Logger. 30-acre thinning. No HCVF on tract, pay-as-cut and observed retained oak component. Harvest started on 09/28/18 and completed on 10/11/2018.

Stop #5: D18 Shilo-Apex

1st thinning of 221-acre tract. Site not yet closed. Logger is MD Master Logger certified. Access to the site needed to be upgraded. Adjacent HCVF includes ESA zones 1, 2, & 3, primarily plant species. DFS and SMZ are considerations on this site. Parker Forestry received 20 loads of stone to be added to the primary haul road. Culverts were sized by the watershed and installed. Observed the culverts and the status of the primary road access during the audit. Landing was small. Still an active harvest, but not operating now, due to wet weather conditions. Preharvest conference occurred on 01/10/19, logger moved off-site on 01/23/19, moved back on 03/26/19, equipment on the job site. Walked to the back of the job across several skid trails, no residual standing tree damage, stump heights reasonable and buffer zones marked and protected by the logger/operator of the site. Observed the 50-foot buffer was established for SMZ protection. Parker Forestry communicated to the auditors that when they completed reconnaissance for forestry operations, the Forester observed 3 distinct Vernal Pools on site. NSF auditors visited 2 out of the 3 vernal pools. Hunting stand in one vernal pool and a deer feeding station in the other. Discussions occurred that MD DNR has an active hunting club lease at this location and long-term monitoring. Bridge mats were used for access to the main haul road.

Thursday, 4 April 2019

Stop #1: Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Management (HWA), 15 Mile Creek Road

Observed an Integrated Pest Management Site: Auditors received an update of HWA. This site is next to MD DNR well-established recreation camp site. This HWA site is not on the Annual Work Plan. Most hemlocks are within the SMZ HCVF. This is a research project plot(s) where injection treatment has occurred since 2016. The Hemlock on site are a buffer to the stream and the recreation site. Discussion occurred on stream temperatures and possible fish impacts. The trees have metal tags labeled for the ongoing monitoring research project. Discussion on climate change and impacts occurred on site. Other discussions topics were the types of pest and chemicals used for injection into the Hemlocks, a multipronged approach is used for some HWA treatment, injection on high visibility areas and beetle releases in some stand areas. Chemical handling is done by the MD Dept of Agriculture, with their chemical usage reported to the respective State Forests.

Stop #1A: 15 Mile Creek

Driving 15 Mile Creek Road, observed 15 Mile Creek signage for areas that have differing fishing regulations. Some reaches of the Creek have "Put & Take" signage, meaning it is stocked and can be fished, other reaches have signage for "Catch and Return", a traditional catch and release fishing area.

Stop #2: GR-2018-S, Stone Mountain Road, contract #0217

Active Harvest 21 acres. Variable retention harvest/clearcut with retention of multiple species of oaks. Cool Season mix used from southern states to apply on the landing. Discussion of the seed mix, including the species mix and where it is obtained. The MD DNR forester used the pre-existing landing for this site. Steep terrain. Mc Custer Logging is owner/operator of the logging company. MD Master logger, not on-site during the field visit. 2015 MD soil and erosion & sediment control measures applied. Skid trails to the contour. Observed in the field that the logger has a primary skid trail to cross the ravines to gain access to harvest trees, no BMP issues noted on the field. 18,6732 board feet of oak, 8,980 board feet of WP saw timber, 319 cords of wood and 112 WP pulp. Some residual stand damage to the retained pines, and retained to potentially become snags or legacy trees.

Reviewed document Attachment D- GR-05-17. Residual trees all should be blue painted which was noted in the field. Reviewed the Pre-Harvest Conformance Checklist dated 11/9/2018, Forest Harvest Operations Checklists dated 11/16/2018 and 11/23/2018. Final Harvest Monitoring form dated 2/27/19. Discussion on snag retention which was observed in the field. Skidder on-site, fire extinguisher on the skidder was empty.

Reviewed internal contractual documents were incomplete on contract dates for end of contact and Central office signatures. (see the observation noted in audit report).

Stop #3: Potomac Bends Wildland Area (PBWA)

Scenic Vista Lookout overlooking the Potomac River. Graffiti noted on the overlook. Recreational signage posted with information. Geology is shale. 10,000 acres of HCVF is delineated at this site; 6,000 acres is designated for RSA. Key species noted is the Alleghany wood rat (state listed species), Kate's Mountain Clover, Small River Bat and Small Footed Bat. Tree species noted Red Cedar, Yellow Oak, Post Oak, Scrub Oak and Buckthorn (some of these species are found on the Shale Barrens). This is habitat for the Pine Warbler(nesting). Discussion on the Great Warrior Trail and the possible use by the Shawnee Tribe.

Stop #3A: Carrol Road Shale Barren ESA

Shale barren located between the overlook and the river below. Unique environment protected as the sun exposure can have temperatures that exceed 140 degrees F; rare plants adapted to the unique environment. Discussion of the flora and fauna that both reside and use the Shale Barrens. Discussion of the 3 main streams in the area (15 Mi Creek, Siding Hill Creek, and Town Creek) and their designation as a 'high quality stream' by the MD Biological Stream Survey.

Stop #3B: Recreation Area/Primitive Campsite

Nearby primitive campsite was closed to prohibit people from venturing out onto the shale beds.

Stop #4: Old Growth Ecological Management Area (OGEMA)

5 acres of unique management. Viewed large individual trees that have been designated as old growth oak. The bisecting road was established by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and in relatively good condition for access. No invasive noted off the road or in the field, but Tree of Heaven has been found nearby in the past and treated with hack & squirt when found. No issues viewed.

Stop #4A: Mertens Road

Historic stoned road established by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Discussion of the 4D Rule and the bat species found. Acoustic surveys have been conducted pre- and post-arrival of White Nose Syndrome. Adjacent Savage River SF has bat hibernacula that is managed by the Nature Conservancy, no hibernacula known to be present on the GRSF.

Stop #5: GR-06-17 Oldtown Orleans Road

Active Harvest. 66-acre mixed oak stand, with pitch pine, table mountain pine, and Virginia pine present. 41-acre harvest area. Variable retention harvest. Logger equipment on site, MD Master Logger, Roy Yonker. Dozer leaking on site, and under the Skidder had some oil observed on the soil below the equipment. Nothing noted in recent BMP inspections of leaking equipment or lack of spill kits and fire extinguishers. See finding in audit report. Logger was not on site. MD DNR forester laid out job for landing placement, buffer management off the landing to the primary road and skid trail layout. Wood utilization: 131,964 Board Feet of mixed oak saw timber. Scarlet Oak 79,282 Board Feet, chestnut oak 30,062 Board Feet, White Oak 22,620 Board Feet. 34 cords of hard pine pulp. Pre-harvest checklist viewed from 03/16/18, multiple BMP checklists viewed from 11 May 2018 through December 2018. Logger moved off-site on 12/07/18, due to wet weather, moved back on-site on 03/08/19, with the most recent BMP checklist completed on 03/28/19, no issues noted in any BMP checklists. Walked the site. Mast trees left, no residual damage, skid trails with no issues, and hardwood tops pulled from the buffered ravines. Discussion on Oak wilt and Oak Decline. None observed in the field. Stump height low. MD DNR forester expects regeneration from both tree sprouting and seed. Discussion of the variable diameter regeneration plots taken at year 4 or year 5 post-harvest. No concerns with natural regeneration as area is actively hunted for deer. Discussion occurred on visual management since this harvest can be seen from a distance. No public concern noted on the harvest. Not able to interview the logger who was not present on site. Field to be seeded, seed mix purchased by contractor from the local Southern State Co-op. Discussion of potential invasives. Field is to be monitored by GRSF as part of the regular monitoring of the area post-harvest. If invasives present, this would be identified during monitoring. At closeout, Forester will mark locations of water bars for logger for installation.

Stop# 5A: Cemetery on Oldtown Orleans Road

Viewed old cemetery on the GRSF. SF caretakes them when found in the field.

Stop #6: GR-03-18 Gorman Road #603-18 off of RT 51

Logger is Cessa Brothers. MD Master Logger. Variable retention harvest. Visual concerns discussed, low stumps and regeneration. Snags and high-quality oak retained as retention. Invasive noted on the landing some noted on primary skid trail but none in the woods noted. Reviewed the post tally sheet. Site is free to grow. No rutting noted on primary or secondary skid trails. Wood is scattered throughout the site to create small mammal habitat. No tops in the buffer (SMZ). Permit for fire wood. Pre-harvest checklist viewed from 06/06/18, multiple BMP checklists viewed from 06/14/18 to 07/20/18. Sale closed on 07/20/18, with site seeded and mulched on 07/20/18. No issues noted in any BMP checklists.

Stop #7: Special Wildlife Habitat Area - Lower Town Creek Road

Acquired by the GRSF in 2015. Early Successional Wildlife Habitat Plan prepared in March 2016. SWHA site; working on writing a plan. Observed various fruit trees planted within enclosures. Active research with native plants and grasses, varied mowing regimes, and fire, with possible chemical applications to maintain current habitat in the open field. Stand 9 has received a grant to remove invasive found. 2-acre Bee Pollinator project for this site. This project started as a 2-acre project and has now expanded into a large portion of Stand 8 and Stand 9 and is part of a multi-state project that is looking at species richness and diversity, as differing management work occurs. The MD DNR forester delineated a nearby family cemetery which had protected boundaries and is noted in the internal GIS.

Stop # 7A: Town Creek Fishery

Driving Town Creek Road, observed signage for areas that have differing fishing requirements. Some reaches of the Creek have signage for "Delayed Harvest", meaning it is a traditional catch and release fishing area from Oct 1st to June 1st, with the ability to harvest fish during the remainder of the year.

Stop # 7B: Recently purchased SF Land

Field and adjacent forest land recently acquired opposite side of the road from the Special Wildlife Habitat area, along Town Creek Road and adjacent to Town Creek. Planted shrubs on both side of irrigation ditches in field that is the floodplain of Town Creek. Riparian buffer of Town Creek. Planted approximately 1-2 years ago.



Appendix 5



Printed: March 31, 2019

NSF Audit Attendance Sheet

Company Name MD DNR

Location Annapolis, MD

Type of Audit SFI 2015-2019 FM Re- Certification Audit

Opening Meeting Date April 2, 2019 Closing Meeting Date April 5, 2019

Name	Position	Attended Opening Meeting?	Attended Closing Meeting?
Keri Yankus	NSF Sr. Lead SFI FM Auditor	X	
Michelle Matteo	NSF. Sr. Lead FSC/SFI FM Auditor	X	X
John Connors	Parker For. Serv.	✓	
Joe Hinson	MD Forest Ass'n	✓	
Kenneth Jolly	MD DNR FS	✓	✓
Don VanHassent	MD DNR For. Ser.	X	
W Allen Jones Jr	Parker Forestry Services	✓	
Mike Schotfield	MD Forest Service	✓	X
Alexander Clark	MD Forest Service	✓	
Matthew Hurd	MD Forest Service	✓	
Anne Houston-Strang	MD Forest Service Assoc. Dir.	✓	
Danahampert	Wildlife + Heritage	✓	
Jack Penhale	MD DNR Forest Service	✓	✓
Stacey Esham	Parker Forestry Services, Inc	✓	
Giana Mc Carthy	SCS Global Services	✓	✓
William McCarty	DNR WHS Natural Heritage	✓	
Ch H D R	Puxille District Forester	✓	
Jennifer Selfridge	MD DNR, NHP Biologist	✓	
Kevin MASSEY	MD DNR FOREST SUC	✓	
Jessica Massey	MD Forest Svc. Technician		

NSF Audit Attendance Sheet

Company Name MD DNR
 Location Annapolis, MD
 Type of Audit SFI 2015-2019 FM Re- Certification Audit
 Opening Meeting Date April 2, 2019 Closing Meeting Date April 5, 2019

Name	Position	Attended Opening Meeting?	Attended Closing Meeting?
Keri Yankus	NSF Sr. Lead SFI FM Auditor	X	
Michelle Matteo	NSF. Sr. Lead FSC/SFI FM Auditor	X	
Jennifer Selfridge	Invertebrate Ecologist, MD DNR	X	
Gilbert Wayne	Burn Ross		
DAN FULLER	Western Region Ecologist ^{WYALIFE} AEEM X		
Noah Rawe	Forest Tech Forest Service		
Scott Campbell	Forest Manager - Savage River SF		
Rob Feldt	FOREST RESOURCE PLANNING		✓
Mark Reaks	Forest Service		
George Eberly	MD Forest Service	✓	
Jack Purdue	MD DNR Forest Service	✓	
John Danney	MD DNR Forest Service	X	
Jolly Curran	MD Dept. of Ag.	X	
Kenneth Jolly	MD DNR FS	✓	
Jesse Morgan	MD DNR FS	✓	
Jennifer Selfridge	MD DNR NHP	✓	



Appendix 6

Checklist for SFI® Section 9, Appendix 1: Audits of Multi-Site Organizations

FRS# OY301 – Maryland DNR Forest Service

Date of audit(s): April 2-5, 2019

3 Terms and Definitions

- 3.1 Organization: The term organization is used to designate any company or other organization owning a management system subject to audit and certification.
3.2 Site: A site is a permanent location where an organization carries out work or a service.
3.3 Multi-Site Organization: An organization having an identified central function (hereafter referred to as a central office – but not necessarily the headquarters of the organization) at which certain activities are planned, controlled or managed and a network of local offices or branches (sites) at which such activities are fully or partially carried out.
3.4 Group Certification Organization: A specific type of multi-site organization where forest owners, forest owners' organizations, forest managers, forest products manufacturers or forest products distributors without a pre-existing legal or contractual link can form a group for the purposes of achieving certification and gaining eligibility for a sampling approach to certification audits.

For audits of conformance with SFI Section 4 in the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules document, multi-site organizations using either IAF-MD1 or alternate approaches to sampling shall ensure that all the relevant sites (including the central function) are subject to the organization's internal audit program and shall have been audited in accordance with that program prior to the certification body starting its assessment. (Section 9, Requirement 4.1.5 Audit Procedures)

Note: Communicate with NSF Project Manager to confirm.

- Input options: N/A, Conforms, Exceeds, O.F.I., Minor NC, Major NC

Audit Notes: Internal audit checklist and management review provided by MD DNR.

4.1 Eligibility Criteria / Method of Sampling (choose 1)

- Eligibility criteria established in IAF-MD1: Use Sub-Checklist 9-1-A below.
Alternative Approaches to sampling provided for in Section 9, Subsection 5.2 of the Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation document: Use Sub-Checklist 9-1-B below.

Sub-Checklist 9-1-A: Eligibility Criteria Established in IAF-MD1

Applicable **Not Applicable**

4.1.1 Multi-site organizations using IAF-MD1 as the basis for sampling shall meet the eligibility criteria established in IAF-MD1, including, but not limited to, the following:

a. The processes at all sites have to be substantially of the same kind and have to be operated to similar methods and procedures.

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

Audit Notes: Individual field sites, MD DNR performs similar methods and procedures for forest management, wildlife management, and recreation.

b. The organization’s management system shall be under a centrally controlled and administered plan and be subject to central management review and all relative sites (including the central administration function) shall be subject to the organization’s internal audit program.

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

Audit Notes: Forest management system is overseen by the state forester located at Maryland DNR Forest Service offices at 580 Taylor Avenue, Annapolis, MD. Interviews confirmed that each area participated in the internal audits and Annapolis Director/State Forester and Associate Director have oversight and input into management system.

c. It shall be demonstrated that the central office of the organization has established a management system in accordance with the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and that the whole organization meets the requirements of the standard.

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

Audit Notes: Interviews confirmed that each area participated in the internal audits and Annapolis Director/State Forester and Associate Director have oversight and input into management system along with the state forester conducting the internal audits March 12,13,14,20, 2019.

d. The organization should demonstrate its ability to collect and analyze data (including, but not limited to, the items listed below) from all sites including the central office and its authority and also demonstrate its authority and ability to initiate organizational change if required:

- i. System documentation and system changes;
- ii. Management review;
- iii. Complaints;
- iv. Evaluation of corrective actions;
- v. Internal audit planning and evaluation of the results;
- vi. Changes to aspects and associated impacts for environmental management systems and
- vii. Different legal requirements.

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

Audit Notes: Internal audits March 12,13,14,20, 2019 conducted and no outcomes noted for corrective actions. Confirmed through interviews that if different legal requirements are changed Annapolis Director/State Forester and Associate Director have oversight and input in communicating to the foresters. Complaints are dealt with internally and confirmed there haven’t been any reported externally to the State SIC in 3-5 years.

The “State Forest Managers Meeting on September 12, 2018 attended by the leadership team, central office staff, district foresters, and state forester managers included topics comprising the management review. Some topics covered include the following: Bee grants, Sustainable Forest Management Plan updates, and internal audits.

New Topics discussed are the following: 1. Two Step Method contract 2. SFMP revisions 3. Forest certification, a. 2018 audit summary b. review of certification system requirements and compliance 4. FSC pesticides a.

Glyphosate CAS Number 1071-83-6 FSC restricted list 5. Climate change summary 6. New timber sale contracts - web page 7. Next SFM meeting – Wednesday, March TDB, 8. State Forests Internal Silvicultural Audit — GR (3/12) PG (3/13) SR (3/14) ES (3/20) 9. Next audit – Week of April 1 — Eastern & Western MD

(END Sub-Checklist 9-1-A: Eligibility Criteria Established in IAF-MD1)



Sub-Checklist 9-1-B: Alternative Approaches to Sampling from Section 9, 5.2

Applicable **Not Applicable**