

The Conservation Fund

77 Vilcom Center, Suite 340
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

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Caspar, California 95420

SFI 2022 Standards and Rules®
Section 2, Forest Management Standard

Recertification Audit



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Forestry Program Audit Report

A. Certificate Holder Information

Certificate Holder	The Conservation Fund
Customer Number	C0144679
Contact Information (Name, title, phone & email)	Brian Schneider, Forest Operations Manager, Working Forest Fund® Office number: 828-785-2555 bschneider@conservationfund.org Jenna Schreiber, Forest Operations Manager, Working Forest Fund® Office number: 513-503-8595 jschreiber@conservationfund.org Holly Newberger, Program Manager, North Coast Forest Conservation Program Office number: 707-962-0712 hnewberger@conservationfund.org
Scope of Certification	Management of lands in The Conservation Fund's Working Forest Fund and related properties including SFI objectives 1-14, 16 and 17. SFI Forest Management code: NSF-SFI-FM-C0144679.
Scope is accurate and appropriate, and matches on certificate, FRS and audit plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (provide a revised statement below) Transition to SFI 2022 Standards and Rules, Section 2 Forest Management Standard



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Locations Included in the Certification
 Note: may be listed as plain text or included in an appendix or a separate file.

<u>Property</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Garcia	CA	24,000
Big River/Salmon Creek	CA	16,050
Gualala	CA	13,913
Buckeye	CA	19,650
Total Dual Certified:		73,613
Stateline	GA,AL	10,366
Pleasant River Headwaters	ME	26,729
White Pine Forest	ME	12,966
East Grand Lake	ME	4,460
Minnesota Heritage Forest	MN	71,912
Brunswick	NC	3,668
Three Rivers	NY	32,919
Cranberry Lake	NY	7,222
Cowee-Bly Hollow	NY, VT	11,884
Lupine	OR, WA	35,550
Clarion Junction	PA	32,594
Penfield	PA	1,963
Skinner Mt	TN	11,723
Chesapeake	VA	8,587
Roanoke River (Stanley)	VA	5,158
Yankee	VT, NH	18,178
Pelican River	WI	69,623
Logan	WV	16,229
Conecuh National Forest	AL	445
Little River Canyon Preserve	AL	58
Pinhoti Trail	AL,GA	3,554
Cleveland National Forest	CA	306
Okfenokee NWR	GA	9,376
Chatahoochee National Forest	GA	279
Maritime Marine WMA	MD	100
Galestown Creek	MD	28
Boundary Waters Land Exchange	MN	24,142
Great Northern Transmission Line	MN	2,189
Sax Zim Bog	MN	161
Dagg	MN	42
Lower Devil's Swamp Little Biloxi Wolf River	MS	1,928
Reeves Jackson	NC	1,276
Wilder Properties/Balsam Range	NC	1,057
Holly Hills	NC	70
Mount Mitchell	NC	780
Delaware Water Gap	NJ	25
Bald Cap	NH	1,227
Francis Marion	SC	10
Herman	TN	249
Big Thicket	TX	641
Petersburg	VA	212
McConnell Pond	VT	4,666
Biddle/Bray	VT	290
AT Bridgewater Barnard	VT	114
Spruce Peak	VT	14
Canaan Valley Refuge	WV	1
Total SFI Only Certified:		434,970
TOTAL		508,583



Significant Changes to Operations or to the Standard(s)	Transition to SFI 2022 Standards and Rules
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B. Audit Team

Lead Auditor	Shannon Wilks
Audit Team Member(s)	Michelle Matteo Mallorie Weinheimer

C. Site Visits

Date and Location of Each Visit	16 August 2022: Opening Meeting (Remote) 17-18 August: Brunswick & Reeves Jackson (NC) 30 August-2 September: Pelican River (WI), Sax-Zim Bog (MN), Boundary Waters (MN), Great Northern Transmission Line (MN) and Dagg (MN) 14 September: White Pine Forest (ME) 9 November: Buckeye (CA) 18 November 2022: Closing Meeting (Remote)
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D. Audit Objectives

<p>State the objective(s) of this audit and provide confirmation that the objectives were fulfilled. Include reasoning for which processes and/or parts of the standard(s) were selected to review. If any standards are upgrading or transitioning to a new version, confirm that evidence supporting conformity to the new/revised requirements is included in the report and/or detailed here.</p>	
Answer	Recertification audit to the SFI 2022 Standards and Rules, Section 2 Forest Management Standard. All applicable objectives were reviewed. All requirements of the transition to SFI 2022 Standards and Rules were confirmed during the audit. Document reviews, interviews and observations during field sites confirmed compliance.
<p>If this is a Surveillance Audit: Explain how the management system meets the requirements and expected outcomes of the standard(s)</p>	
Answer	Not Applicable.
<p>If this is a Recertification Audit: Consider the performance of the program over the cycle through a review of all audits in the previous certification cycle, internal audits, management reviews, corrective actions, and continual improvement. Describe the evidence supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective interaction between all parts of the program and its overall effectiveness, • overall effectiveness of the system in its entirety considering internal and external changes, • demonstrated commitment by top management to maintain the system and maintain continuous improvement, • program contribution to the achievement of the client’s policy and objectives, and the intended results. <p>If there were any repeat findings during the audit cycle that indicate systemic issues, explain how they were addressed.</p>	
Answer	Recertification audit to the SFI 2022 Standards and Rules, Section 2 Forest Management Standard. All applicable objectives were reviewed. All requirements of the transition to SFI 2022 Standards and Rules were confirmed during the audit. Document reviews, interviews and observations during field sites confirmed compliance. No previous non-conformances were identified.

E. Audit Results

Auditor Recommendation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant, maintain or renew certification <input type="checkbox"/> Grant, maintain or renew certification pending closure of CARs <input type="checkbox"/> Grant, maintain or renew certification pending follow-up assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Do not grant, maintain or renew certification (notify NSF office immediately)
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Number and Summary of Findings of "Exceeds the Requirements"	-2-
Number and Summary of Findings of "Opportunity for Improvement"	-0-
Number and Summary of Findings of "Minor Nonconformity"	-0-
Number and Summary of Findings of "Major Nonconformity"	-0-
Summary of review of nonconformities from previous audit(s)	-0-
Notes from Opening and Closing Meetings	Opening meeting was conducted on 16 August 2022 remotely with Forest Operations Managers and SFI auditors. NSF and SFI procedures were reviewed. Final Field sites were confirmed. Field site audits began on 17 August and concluded on 9 November. Nine sites were selected for review in NC, WI, MN, ME and CA. Auditors compared notes and prepared for closing meeting. Closing meeting was conducted remotely on 18 November 2022. Audit findings and review of audit finalization process was communicated.
All logos and/or labels, including ANSI, ANAB, SFI, PEFC, ATFS, etc. are utilized correctly in accordance with NSF policies.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (a finding of non-conformity should be issued) <input type="checkbox"/> N/A (not using any labels in marketing, website or on-product)

F. Appendices

Appendix 1	Audit Notification and Agenda
Appendix 2	SFI Checklist
Appendix 3	SFI Public Summary Report
Appendix 4	Field Site Summary
Appendix 5	Attendance
Appendix 6	Covid Appendix



Appendix 1

Forest Management Audit Notification Letter

23 July 2022

Brian Schneider, Forest Operations Manager, Working Forest Fund®
The Conservation Fund
P O Box 684
Bangor, ME 04402

RE: 2022 SFI and FSC Recertification Forest Management Audits

Dear Mr. Schneider,

As we discussed, I will be conducting your audit as described in the attached itinerary. Please confirm that these dates are still appropriate for the audit of your program's continued conformance to the below standard(s):

- SFI® Forest Management Standard (2022 version)
- FSC US Forest Management Standard, ver. 1.1, 2018
- FSC CoC Requirements for FM/COC Certificate Holders – If applicable
- Specific declarations and processes developed by your organization

Scope of Certification

SFI: *Management of lands in The Conservation Fund's Working Forest Fund and related properties. This certificate covers SFI 2022 Standards and Rules, Section 2: Forest Management: Objectives 1 through 14, and 16-17. Fiber sold under this certificate counts as 100% SFI and 100% PEFC certified forest content. The SFI Certificate Number is NSF-SFIS-6R031.*

FSC: *Forest Management Multiple FMU Certificate with 4 FMUs, Central Office in Chapel Hill, NC, USA. The Conservation Fund SA-FM/COC-007898.*

Preparing for the Audit

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

- Forest Management Plan for the lands to be audited to SFI &/or FSC
- Documentation for monitoring, non-conformances identified and corrective action
- Status of Inventory and growth and yield modeling
- Approval for logo usage (SFI - FSC)
- Internal Audit records
- Management Review records
- Training records, license, certifications (Internal and external)
- Documentation for operation of complaint procedure, including any ILO complaints
- Herbicide and Pesticide listing of chemicals and acreage
- Policies regarding certification, health, and safety (Example Organizations HR Manual)
- Wildlife habitat plans and forestry prescriptions
- BMP monitoring documents
- Contracts for harvesting and silvicultural activities, loggers/operators/truck drivers, and road building operators
- Listing of State and Regulatory contacts including but not limited to State regulations, SIC / 1-800- SFI
- Educational Opportunities for Loggers/landowners/community outreach
- Average sizes of clear cuts
- Cultural Resources
- Recreational Leases documents/records and monitoring program



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- Receiving documents for raw material
- Supplier documentation of certification
- Examples of sales documents such as invoices, shipping documents
- Verification of Controversial Sources
- Documentation for subcontracting/outsourcing
- Documentation for multisite organization (if applicable)

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

Additionally, prior to the audit, please ensure you:

- Address any open Corrective Action Requests you may have (see your last reports)
- Check if the scope of your certification needs to be changed (eg. Scope/number of sites) / any changes to management system.
- Prepare summary records of certified sales
- Prepare summary records of any chemical use.
- Check if your forest area has changed (for calculation of FSC[®] AAF/PEFC[™] notification fee).

SFI Objectives and Performance Measure (PM)/Indicators to be Assessed

This year's assessment will include a review of the following:

- Recertification - All Objectives 1 through 17.

Your responsibilities also include the role of "central administration" for this multi-site program. We will review the SFI multi-site requirements during the office/document review time of the audit.

FSC Principals & Criteria (P&C) to be Assessed:

This year's assessment will include a review of:

- 1) Recertification – All P&C.

The following criteria as applicable:

- Plantations >10000ha (24,710 ac): 2.3, 4.2, 4.4, 6.7, 6.9, 10.6, 10.7, & 10.8
- Natural Forests >50000ha (123,553 ac) ('low intensity' SLIMFs exempt): 1.5, 2.3, 3.2, 4.2, 4.4, 5.6, 6.2, 6.3, 8.2, & 9.4
- FMUs containing HC VF ('small forest' SLIMFs exempt): 6.2, 6.3, 6.9, & 9.4.
- Any criteria where there is a high risk of non-compliance to the new standard AND any significant changes to the standard.

All Standards being assessed:

Any PMs/Std/P&C where non-compliances were observed in previous audits.

Any PMs/Std/P&C where non-compliances observed during the audit.

A range of stakeholders may be consulted during the audit.

Sampling

The 2021 audit will include visits to 4 different properties under TCF's certificates, as noted in bold below. 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 four Forests, but is used in the selection of sites to be visited.

SFI – Multi-site Certificate with 50 sites and 11 service providers. Number of sites to sample: 9 SFI – Buckeye, Reeves Jackson, Brunswick, Great Northern Transmission Line, Sax Zim Bog, & Dagg (6 existing), and Pelican River, Boundary Waters Land Exchange, White Pine Forest (3 new), noted below in **bold**.

FSC - Multiple FMU Certificate with 4 FMUs – all below properties are also dual certified to SFI FM. Number of FSC FMUs to sample: 1 FMU (**Gualala**), noted in **bold**.



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<u>Property</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>TCF Certified Status</u>	<u>Program Status</u>
Garcia	CA	24,000	FSC/SFI dual	WFF
Big River/Salmon Creek	CA	16,050	FSC/SFI dual	WFF
Gualala	CA	13,913	FSC/SFI dual	WFF
Buckeye	CA	19,650	FSC/SFI dual	WFF
Total Dual Certified:		73,613		
Stateline	GA,AL	10,366	SFI - 2020	WFF
Pleasant River Headwaters	ME	26,729	SFI - 2019	WFF
White Pine Forest	ME	12,966	SFI - 2022	WFF
East Grand Lake	ME	4,460	SFI - 2015	WFF
Minnesota Heritage Forest	MN	71,912	SFI - 2021	WFF
Brunswick	NC	3,668	SFI - 2016	WFF
Three Rivers	NY	32,919	SFI - 2020	WFF
Cranberry Lake	NY	7,222	SFI - 2016	WFF
Cowee-Bly Hollow	NY, VT	11,884	SFI - 2018	WFF
Lupine	OR, WA	35,550	SFI - 2022	WFF
Clarion Junction	PA	32,594	SFI - 2019	WFF
Penfield	PA	1,963	SFI - 2015	WFF
Skinner Mt	TN	11,723	SFI - 2018	WFF
Chesapeake	VA	8,587	SFI - 2015	WFF
Roanoke River (Stanley)	VA	5,158	SFI - 2020	WFF
Yankee	VT, NH	18,178	SFI - 2016	WFF
Pelican River	WI	69,623	SFI - 2022	WFF
Logan	WV	16,229	SFI - 2016	WFF
Conecuh National Forest	AL	445	SFI - 2021	CL
Little River Canyon Preserve	AL	58	SFI - 2015	CL
Pinhoti Trail	AL,GA	3,554	SFI - 2015	CL
Cleveland National Forest	CA	306	SFI - 2016	CL
Okefenokee NWR	GA	9,376	SFI - 2015	CL
Chatahoochee National Forest	GA	279	SFI - 2015	CL
Maritime Marine WMA	MD	100	SFI - 2015	CL
Galestown Creek	MD	28	SFI - 2015	CL
Boundary Waters Land Exchange	MN	24,142	SFI - 2022	CL
Great Northern Transmission Line	MN	2,189	SFI - 2021	CL
Sax Zim Bog	MN	161	SFI - 2021	CL
Dagg	MN	42	SFI - 2021	CL
Lower Devil's Swamp Little Biloxi Wolf River	MS	1,928	SFI - 2015	CL
Reeves Jackson	NC	1,276	SFI - 2015	CL
Wilder Properties/Balsam Range	NC	1,057	SFI - 2021	CL
Holly Hills	NC	70	SFI - 2022	CL



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Mount Mitchell	NC	780	SFI - 2022	CL
Delaware Water Gap	NJ	25	SFI - 2022	CL
Bald Cap	NH	1,227	SFI - 2015	CL
Francis Marion	SC	10	SFI - 2015	CL
Herman	TN	249	SFI - 2021	CL
Big Thicket	TX	641	SFI - 2015	CL
Petersburg	VA	212	SFI - 2015	CL
McConnell Pond	VT	4,666	SFI - 2015	CL
Biddle/Bray	VT	290	SFI - 2015	CL
AT Bridgewater Barnard	VT	114	SFI - 2015	CL
Spruce Peak	VT	14	SFI - 2015	CL
Canaan Valley Refuge	WV	1	SFI - 2015	CL
Total SFI Only Certified:		434,970		
TOTAL				
		508,583		

Field Site Selection

Preliminary site selections include preparing a candidate site list of forest stands or areas harvested in the past 2 years with associated forestry environmental risk categories including FECV, RT&E, road construction, riparian areas, and other unique/special sites. Please provide this to your auditor(s) a minimum of 1 week before the audit.

The NSF 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 audits. 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.

Audit Logistics

Travel: Travel will be coordinated with client. Auditors will typically arrive the morning before the audit begins, and travel home, either the day of the closing meeting or the following day.

Rental Car: Auditor(s) to have a rental car for travel to audit start and end locations. Auditors will travel in client employee vehicles for daily travel, unless other arrangements have been discussed.

Lodging: Auditor(s) to book lodging in coordination with client.

Meals: Auditor and employee lunches will be in the field to facilitate travel time. Other meals will be in coordination with client.

Meetings & Conference Rooms: If held indoors, mask wearing is required for NSF auditors, as part of NSF's Health and Safety Process. Auditors will be notified of client's COVID-19 policy and we will adhere to your policy.

Document Exchange: If we will be using a shared document drive such as MoveIT to share and access files, please be prepared to upload any requested documents in advance of the audit, to limit sharing of paper documents among each other during the audit.

Staff and Stakeholder Interviews: Due to COVID-19 health concerns, we will conduct some interviews remotely or in a setting where adequate social distancing and air flow can be provided. Additionally, as some staff may have travel restrictions, some staff may be participating in parts of the audit remotely. We shall utilize information and communication technology (ICT) to evaluate those requirements that cannot be evaluated fully on-site.

Usage of Trademarks Logos and Labels

SFI certificate holders: 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:



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Courtney P. Guillen, Coordinator, Office of Statistics and Label Use
Sustainable Forestry Initiative
202.719.1391 ext. 338
courtney.guillen@sfiprogram.org

FSC certificate holders: Make sure you are using the most current version of the relevant FSC COC & Trademark standards (FSC-STD-50-001-v2-0) and send your requests to: forestrytrademark@soilassociation.org.

Health and Safety

Please advise the Audit Team of any health and safety requirements, especially PPE required. The audit team will not proceed in any situations which they deem to be unsafe.

Please provide hardhats and safety vests, auditors will bring other necessary PPE, such as boots & glasses.

Confidentiality

All auditors sign a confidentiality agreement before they are eligible to perform any audits. According to SFI & FSC requirements, a public summary of the audit reports will be published.

Audit Team Members and Contact information

Role	Name	Email	Phone Number
Lead Auditor FSC & Team Auditor SFI:	Michelle Matteo	mmatteo@nsf.org	413.265.3714
Lead Auditor SFI:	Shannon Wilks	Swilks@nsf.org	903.278.7766
Team Member(s) FSC & SFI:	Mallore Weinheimer	Mweinheimer@nsf.org	360.504.8911
Technical Expert:	n/a		
Observer:	n/a		

Note others as appropriate: e.g.: Technical Expert, Observer, Witness Auditor, Translator

If using a Technical Expert:

- a) their participation in the audit shall be limited to the task they are requested to do and each technical expert shall be assigned to the responsibility of a specific auditor in the audit team;
- b) the technical expert(s) should be accompanied by the auditor to whom they are assigned;
- c) if deemed necessary, the technical expert(s) may be allowed to perform interviews and other specified tasks unaccompanied, as instructed by the audit team leader;
- d) technical expert(s) shall neither make conclusions on the conformity with certification requirements nor communicate them to the client.

Audit Report Topics and Follow-up Actions

A report will be provided to you following the audit, which includes background information, completed checklist, and any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) raised. It will be necessary to close out any CARs raised within the proposed timescale.

Agenda for Review

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

Thank you for selecting NSF-SA to provide your audit services.

Sincerely,



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Michelle L. Matteo

Michelle Matteo
Lead Auditor, NSF
413.265.3714
mmatteo@nsf.org



Forest Management Audit Agenda

Type of Audit

- Stage 1
- Stage 2 / Main Audit
- Recertification / Reassessment
- Surveillance [Specify S1/S2/S3/S4]
- Verification
- Other (specify) _____

Audit Objectives

Determine if certification should be maintained to:

- SFI® 2022 Standards and Rules: Section 2, Forest Management
- FSC US Forest Management Standard, ver. 1.1, 2018

Schedule

Day/Date & Time*	Activity/Process and Location to be Audited	Auditor
<p>The Audit Agenda will be reviewed and confirmed during the opening meeting at Central/Head Office. However, it may change during the audit in response to issues identified during the assessment. A Site/Branch Audit will only require a summary opening meeting. Stakeholders will be consulted during field visits or by appointment.</p>		
<p>August 16, 2022 11:00 AM (Eastern)</p>	<p>Opening Meeting/Agenda Review-Remote (MS Teams) Please complete people to be present: Brian Schneider, Forest Operations Manager, Working Forest Fund®; Holly Newberger, North Coast Program Manager, Jenna Schreiber, Forest Operations Manager, Working Forest Fund. Auditors: Michelle Matteo, Shannon Wilks, & Mallore Weinheimer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions, Confirmation of Roles, Audit Objectives, and resources/facilities required by the audit team • Review Audit Procedures and Plan, including; timetable, audit objectives, including standards used and selected requirements to be assessed, methods and procedures, including sampling process, determine Interviewees, confirmation of matters relating to confidentiality • Formal communication channels between the audit team and auditee • Review and discuss changes to the Facility Record Sheet (FRS) (contact information, billing information, review and confirm scope and Product Group List, changes in operations, changes to FSC AAF Class, etc.) • Confirming relevant work safety, emergency and security procedures for the audit team • Conditions under which audit may be terminated • Discussion of corrective action requests / plans, including method of reporting audit findings / grading of CARs • Review of findings (CARs-OBS/OFI) raised during previous audits 	<p>Michelle Matteo (MM), Shannon Wilks (SW), Mallore Weinheimer (MW).</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting staff interviews in the absence of (line) management • Note: there will be a need to interview workers / stakeholders without managers present as this is part of the process • Overview of Logo or Label use • Records of any complaints received by Company and Complaints/Appeals system on the conduct or conclusions of an Audit • Overview by your staff of program • Discuss field site visit provisions and other logistical issues • Select final field sites for the selected forester regions • Client questions 	
		Site visits	
Location: Brunswick Property, NC (Near Wilmington, NC)			
17 August 2022	10:00 am	Site visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brunswick, NC 	SW
	4:00 pm	Daily wrap-up	
	4:30 pm	End of day	
Location: Reeves Jackson Preserve, NC (Near Columbia, NC)			
18 August 2022	10:00 am	Site visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reeves Jackson, NC 	SW
	4:00 pm	Daily wrap-up	
	4:30 pm	End of day	
Location: Address TBD			
19 Aug. 2022 14 Sept 2022	8:00 am	Site visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Pine Forest, ME 	MM
	4:00 pm	Daily wrap-up	
	4:30 pm	End of day	
Location: Auditors fly into MSP/Travel to Rhinelander, WI <i>Suggested Lodging: American Inn</i>			
30 August 2022	8:00 am	Site visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pelican River, WI 	SW & MW
	4:00 pm	Daily wrap-up	
	4:30 pm	End	
Location: Auditors travel to St Louis County, MN <i>Lodging: TBD</i>			
31 August 2022		Travel Day	SW & MW
Location: St. Louis County, MN			



Lodging: TBD			
1 September 2022	8:00 am	Site visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary Waters Land Exchange, MN • Great Northern Transmission Line, MN • Sax Zim Bog, MN • Dagg, MN 	SW & MW
	4:00 pm	Daily wrap-up	
	4:30 pm	End of day	
Location: St. Louis County, MN			
2 September 2022	8:00 am	Site visits: Complete Site Visits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary Waters Land Exchange, MN • Great Northern Transmission Line, MN • Sax Zim Bog, MN • Dagg, MN 	SW & MW
	12:00 pm	Daily wrap-up	
	12:30 PM	Auditors depart for MSP	
Location: 14951 "A" Caspar Rd, Caspar, CA 95420			
8-9 Nov. 2022	8:00 am	Site visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gualala Forest, CA • Buckeye Forest, CA 	MM & MW
	4:00 pm	Daily wrap-up	
	4:30 pm	End of day	
Location: Address TBD – Likely Remote			
TBD, Sept or Oct. 2022	9:00 am	Review of Documentation and Evidence, including (but not limited to) the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFI 2022 - All Objectives/PM/Standards/P&C • FSC V1.1 2018 - All Objectives/PM/Standards/P&C • Written procedures, training records, trademark approvals, and outsourcing agreements • Management Plans • Overview of SFI Survey forms • Review Logo or Label use and claims on sales documents • Inventory Process and Updates • Annual Work Plans • Heritage Mapping: Biodiversity database • Historic/Cultural Sites • HCVF and RSA Processes 	SW, MW, MM



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring records for FECV/HCVs • Forest Insect and Disease Program • Invasive Control Program • Management Review • OG • Tax payments • Deed and lease information • Recent salvage activity/acreage • Multi-site requirements (if multi-site) • Other Issues <p>Staff Interviews to confirm key personnel understanding of relevant responsibilities and effectiveness of training received. Auditor shall interview a sufficient variety and number of employees and contractors at each operational site selected for evaluation. If multi-site, employees interviewed at each of the selected sites.</p> <p>Risk-based prioritization of audit areas based on importance of process/area.</p> <p>For Groups only: Group member records, records of internal monitoring, records of any corrective actions issued by the group entity</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews</p>	
	4:00 pm	Daily wrap-up	
	4:30 pm	End of day	
Location: TBD, likely completed remotely			
18 Nov. 2022	12:00 pm	Closing Meeting Preparation: Auditors take time to consolidate notes and confirm audit findings	SW, MW, MM
18 Nov. 2022	1:00 pm	<p>Closing Meeting</p> <p>Please complete people to be present: Brian Schneider, Forest Operations Manager, Working Forest Fund®; Holly Newberger, North Coast Program Manager, Jenna Schreiber, Forest Operations Manager, Working Forest Fund.</p> <p>Auditors: Michelle Matteo, Shannon Wilks, & Mallore Weinheimer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit review and advising that audit evidence is based on sampling process. • Discussion of preliminary audit findings; CAR grading, normative reference, timeframe for closure and consequences of not meeting closure deadlines. • Audit follow up: - NSF-SA Report Review and final audit/certification decision. 	



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recording of any divergent opinions where they could not be resolved.• NSF and Soil Association Certification Complaints/Appeals system on the conduct or conclusions of an Audit (available on websites).	
18 November 2022	1:30 pm	End	

*Audit conducted jointly for both the SFI FM and the FSC FM audit; times approximate and may vary.



Appendix 2

SFI® 2022 Forest Land Management Standard Audit Checklist

C0144679 – The Conservation Fund

17-18 August (NC); 30 August-2 September (WI/MN); 14 September (ME); 9 November (CA); 18 November 2022 (Closing Meeting)

Objective 1. Forest Management Planning

To ensure forest management plans include long-term sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid forest conversion or afforestation of ecologically important areas.

Performance Measure 1.1.

Certified Organizations shall ensure that forest management plans include long-term harvest levels that are sustainable and consistent with appropriate growth-and-yield models. Indicators:

- 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 and use of 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. consideration of non-timber issues such as 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 fields: N/A, Conforms, Exceeds, O.F.I., Minor NC, Major NC

Notes: Reviewed forest management plan developed by CLC (Compass Land Consultants) and verified it covers all above indicators in detail. In person interviews with staff. In field interviews also included explanations of larger objectives of TCF and how projects like Pelican River properties meet stand level, landscape level, and organizational level forest management planning objectives. Site visits verified stand information and harvest plans aligned with forest management plan objectives and forest characteristics.

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

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

Notes: Forest management plan developed by CLC includes detailed documentation of forest growth and yield models using USFS's FVS and sustainable harvest models from Remsoft's Woodstock software. Sustainable harvest yields are detailed by species for next 10 years in management plan.

- 3. A forest inventory system and a method to calculate growth and yield is used to determine annual and/or periodic harvest levels.

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

Notes: See measure 10.1.2 – CLC uses USFS's FVS system to model growth and yield models.

- 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.

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

Notes: Forest management plan indicates annual monitoring and harvest planning to continually monitor harvest and yield information, and that forest inventory data will be updated as needed.

- 5. Documentation of forest management (such as: planting, fertilization, and thinning) consistent with assumptions in harvest plans.

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



Notes Forest management plan and harvest-prep plans align in goals/objectives, and harvest management needs. CLC and TCF staff further verified knowledge of plan and implementation of forest management as described in management plan and harvest plans. Site visits of post-harvest and active harvest at Pelican River also verified that harvest plans had been followed and implemented correctly.

6. Assessment of the local or regional social, environmental, and economic effects of forest management operations contained in the forest management plan.

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

Notes Field interviews conducted included that TCF follows a "bottom up" management strategy, which starts with working with the local/regional community to identify impacts of forest management operations and to best meet local needs in alignment with TCF objectives. Document review of forest management plan for Pelican River goes into history of site and local considerations.

Performance Measure 1.2.

Certified Organizations shall not convert one forest cover type to another forest cover type unless an assessment has been conducted to determine ecological impacts and provide appropriate justification. Indicators:

- 1. Certified Organizations shall not convert one forest cover type to another forest cover type, unless the conversion:
 - a. does not convert native forest cover types that are rare, ecologically important, or that put any native forest cover types at risk of becoming rare; i and
 - b. does not create significant adverse impacts on Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old growth forests, forest critical to threatened and endangered species, or special sites or ecologically important non-forest eco-systems; and
 - c. includes objectives for long-term outcomes that support maintaining native forest cover types and ecological function; and
 - d. is in compliance with relevant national and regional policy and legislation related to land use and forest management.

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

Notes Forest management plan, staff interviews, and field visits all verify that forests are managed to sustain and improve native forest habitat that is site appropriate.

- 2. A proposed conversion deemed appropriate per 1.2.1, and which has considered impacts relative to scale, may be implemented subject to a landscape assessment that considers:
 - a. a response to address forest health issues such as pests or pathogens, or proactive consideration of anticipated impacts of fire or climate change, reforestation challenges, or riparian protection needs, provided that such justification is supported by the best scientific information.
 - b. site productivity, economics, and/or stand quality.
 - c. ecological impacts of the conversion at the site and landscape scale, as well as consideration for any appropriate mitigation measures; and
 - d. appropriate consultation with local communities, Indigenous Peoples, and other stakeholders who could be affected by such activities.

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

Notes a. TCF's SFI Forest Management Program document states that forest will not be converted unless assessment is completed. TCF also states that they seek to purchase high value conservation lands and transition them to conservation buyers, and management focuses on conservation where conversion is not generally applicable unless being converted to more appropriate ecological condition.
b. Interviews with field staff indicated strong awareness of conservation values and no indication of conversion on any sites visited.
c. Site visits and specific management plans and operational documents all aligned and no conversion was planned or occurred.

Performance Measure 1.3.

Certified Organizations 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. 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

- Notes
- a. TCF's SFI Forest Management Program document clarifies that TCF will manage forests and planted stand for range of benefits and will not convert forest types except with goal of ecological restoration.
 - b. Staff and contractors were all knowledgeable on forest management of all properties reviewed and no properties were being converted.
 - c. Site visits further verified, no conversion or activities observed. All sites managed for highest conservation and ecological value.

Performance Measure 1.4.

Certified Organizations shall not afforest in locations which negatively impact ecologically important natural communities, threatened and endangered species, or native natural communities which could be at risk of becoming rare. Indicators:

1. Any afforestation activity must include an evaluation of the proposed site to determine the presence of:
 - a. ecologically important natural communities, or
 - b. threatened and endangered species, or
 - c. native natural communities that could be at risk of becoming rare.
2. Afforestation shall not occur on that location if the evaluation determines a negative impact to:
 - a. ecologically important natural communities, or
 - b. threatened and endangered species, or
 - c. native natural communities which could be at risk of becoming rare.

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

- Notes
- a. Afforestation was not observed on any sites, nor in any management plans for sites visited. Staff and field interviews further verified this.

Objective 2. Forest Health and Productivity

To ensure long-term forest productivity, forest health and conservation of forest resources through prompt reforestation, afforestation, deploying integrated pest management strategies, minimized chemical use, soil conservation, and protecting forests from damaging agents.

Performance Measure 2.1.

Certified Organizations shall promptly reforest after final harvest. Indicators:

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

- Notes
- a. All field sites visited were single tree selection harvests with adequate remaining forest (no reforestation required), or clearcut with the objective of encouraging natural regeneration of native species, mostly aspen and mixed hardwoods. Multiple staff verified this, operators verified this at field site during harvest.
 - b. Quaker site was excellent example of successful aspen natural regeneration post-harvest with healthy population of aspen already established less than 1 year post harvest.
 - c. FMU harvest documents aligned with field observations and staff interviews, indicating forest stocking rates and regeneration align with SFI objectives.

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

- Notes
- TCF's SFI Forest Management Program specifies that planted forests that have lower than 300 TPA will have an analysis done to determine the need for reestablishment of the planted area and spatial distribution of the seedlings and potential for natural regeneration.



3. Plantings of native or non-invasive naturalized tree species are preferred. In exceptional circumstances where exotic tree species are being planted, they should not increase risk to native ecosystems.

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

Notes TCF evidence manual and SFI Forest Management Program verify that no exotic species are planted. This aligns with field visits and staff interviews as all evidence observed indicates that forests are managed only for conservation and natural forest communities.

4. Protection of desirable or planned advanced natural regeneration during harvest.

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

Notes

- a. SFI Forest Management Program outlines protection of desirable native plant communities on all sites as overall strategy of TCF.
- b. Site visits including Longshot verified protection of desirable native species (Sugar maple) and single tree selection harvest was utilized to protect desirable trees. Pre and post-harvest site reviews confirmed this had been done effectively.
- c. Staff were all knowledgeable about ecology of forest sites and site specific goals to protect and regenerate native/desirable plant communities.

Performance Measure 2.2.

Certified Organizations shall have a program to minimize chemical use required to achieve management objectives while protecting employees, neighbors, the public and the environment, including wildlife and aquatic habitats. Indicators:

1. Pest management shall be implemented through the use of integrated pest management.

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

Notes

- a. TCF's SFI Forest Management Program outlines a detailed Integrated Pest Management Program that conforms to SFI's standards utilizing physical, chemical, and cultural control methods as appropriate to enhance and protect the health of forest ecosystems. Forestry personnel also stay informed of current threats to forest health.
- b. Interviews with field staff indicated knowledge of forest health risks and knowledge of IPM on each site.

2. Minimized chemical use required to achieve management objectives.

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

Notes

- a. TCF's SFI Forest Management Program includes the following statement: "Chemical herbicide use is continually reviewed by the Forest Operations Manager and forestry consultant for opportunities to reduce the rate of herbicide use, treatment area, and the number of applications. Through the review process, the Forest Operations Manager and forestry consultant engage in a continual improvement process focused on achieving optimum results while utilizing the narrowest spectrum of chemicals and minimum application rates."

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

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

Notes

- a. Refer to TCF's SFI Forest Mgmt Program statement in 2.2.2

4. 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

Notes

- a. TCF's SFI Forest Management Program document contains detailed requirements for pesticide use including following all labels and applicable federal, state, and local regulations. MSDS sheets are also stored with TCF's forestry consultant.

5. 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

Notes TCF's SFI Forest Management Program states that TCF's Forest Operations Manager annually reviews list of WHO type 1A and 1B pesticides and Stockholm Convention On Persistent Organic Pollutants to ensure they are not used. Staff interviews confirmed this.

6. 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



Notes See evidence in 2.2.5

- 7. Supervision of forest chemical applications by state- or provincially trained or certified applicators.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes a. TCF's SFI Forest Management Program document requires forest chemical applicators to be licensed and certified contractors for pesticide applications and licenses are confirmed prior to awarding contract.

- 8. Use of management practices appropriate to the situation, such as:
 - 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 limit 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. use of spill response plans and chemical spill kits;
 - j. filing of required state or provincial reports; and/or
 - k. use of methods to ensure protection of threatened and endangered species.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes No use of herbicides used on properties on properties. TCF has strict guidance on selection of herbicide applicators and verification of certifications/licenses.

Performance Measure 2.3.

Certified Organizations shall implement practices that protect and maintain forest and soil productivity and soil health. Indicators:

- 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

Notes Detailed soil information is included in forest management plans and acquired through NRCS soils database. Maps are also included in appendix.

- 2. Use of erosion control measures to minimize the loss of soil and impacts to site productivity.

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

Notes Management plan outlines methods for reducing risks of soil compaction. Site visits verified no major soil disturbance activities. Low impact harvest methods were used to reduce soil compaction further.

- 3. Post-harvest conditions conducive to maintaining site productivity (such as: retained down woody debris and minimized skid trails).

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

Notes Site visits on recent harvests verified adequate site clean up based on harvest plan and monitoring. Downed woody debris was observed, slash had been broken down, and low soil disturbance.

- 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

Notes Harvest prescriptions for single tree selection allowed for high percentage of standing forest, also selective harvests to help stimulate new forest types (aspen regeneration) were observed and had been successfully executed.
Harvest prescriptions matched field observations. Field staff and operators were all well informed on harvest prescriptions and requirements for leave trees. Leave trees marked on multiple sites to meet silvicultural prescriptions.

- 5. Practices that address harvesting and site preparation to protect soil productivity and soil health.

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

Notes TCF Forest Management Program document cites : Soil erosion is minimized through silvicultural and seasonal planning, the implementation of state specific Best Management Practices (BMPs), and by utilizing the most appropriate harvesting technology and equipment for every harvest.



Timber harvest monitoring contracts recording soil conditions during and post-harvest were also verified.

6. Road construction, skidding layout, and harvest plans designed to minimize impacts to soil productivity and soil health.
 N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Notes TCF takes road construction into consideration and has policies around this in the TCF Forest Management Program document, which was confirmed that policies had been followed during field sites through interviews and reviewing pre-harvest contracts and site conditions during harvests. No concerns noted.

Performance Measure 2.4.

Certified Organizations shall manage to protect forests from damaging agents, such as environmentally or economically undesirable levels of wildfire, pests, diseases, and invasive species, to maintain and improve long-term forest health, productivity, and economic viability. Indicators:

1. Program to protect forests from damaging agents.
 N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Notes

- a. TCF’s mission is to protect and enhance working and conservation forests. TCF’s SFI Forest Management Program document provides ample evidence of strategies to protect forests from damaging agents.
- b. Field sites visits showed no evidence of significant damaging agents.
- c. Interviews with staff and reviewing harvest plans indicated that there was high level of knowledge on forest health and protection for each site and each site addressed specific forest health goals effectively.

2. Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to reduce susceptibility to damaging agents.
 N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Notes

- a. TCF’s SFI Forest Management Program document details that forest management units will be managed for highest and best ecological value for each site.
- b. Field interviews with forest management operators were knowledgeable on forest health and specific issues on each site.
- c. FMU pre-harvest contracts also outlined forest management practices to encourage healthy and productive forests, and site observations confirmed that contracts were being carried out effectively.

3. Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control programs.
 N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Notes TCF’s SFI Forest Management Program document states, “Suppression of wildfires is accomplished in cooperation with state forestry agencies and rural fire control districts.” Field interviews with staff continually confirmed strong partnerships with local agencies as well on every site.

Performance Measure 2.5.

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

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

Notes TCF’s SFI Forest Management Program document states that, “ TCF may purchase improved seedlings from local nurseries. The improved planting stock is typically evaluated by the nursery contractor as part of the university sponsored research and testing programs.”



Objective 3. Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources

To protect the water quality and water quantity of rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, and other water bodies.

Performance Measure 3.1.

Certified Organizations shall meet or exceed all applicable federal, provincial, state, and local water quality laws and meet or exceed best management practices. Indicators:

- 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

Notes TCF's forest management plan has detailed policy which conforms to water quality laws and requires BMPs for each state/region followed. All water quality issues are reviewed and addressed during pre-project planning process and contracts require BMP compliance.

Site visits confirmed water quality BMPs had been followed. Newly replaced culvert was observed and no issues were observed.

- 2. Contract provisions that specify conformance to best management practices.

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

Notes TCF's forest management plan specifies that contractors and forestry consultants are required to follow BMP's.

Harvest contracts confirmed presence of requirement for following BMPs and no issues were observed during site visits and field interviews.

- 3. Monitoring of overall best management practices implementation.

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

Notes Monitoring checklist required in TCF's forest management program guidelines.

Forest harvest operations confirmed presence of forester on weekly basis. Detailed notes on which sections were visited and when they were completed were also observed on multiple sites.

Performance Measure 3.2.

Certified Organizations shall implement water, wetland, and riparian protection programs based on climate, soil type, terrain, vegetation, ecological function, harvesting system, state best management practices (BMPs), provincial guidelines and other applicable factors. Indicators:

- 1. Program addressing management and protection of water quality of rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, other water bodies and riparian areas during all phases of management.

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

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program document outlines detailed guidance on management and protection of water quality on site: "TCF utilizes a risk assessment approach based on peer-reviewed literature to analyze the potential impact of timber harvesting activities on water quantity. The risk of harvest to water quantity is described within pre-harvest planning documentation and any need for mitigation is also outlined."

Field visits and reviewing pre-harvest and harvest contracts conform to BMPs and TCF guidance on protecting water resources.

- 2. Program to protect water quantity during all phases of management.

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

Notes TCF demonstrates robust program to protect water quality during all phases of management detailed in TCF's Forest Management Program document. No concerns observed on site or during interviews.

- 3. Programs that address wet-weather events in order to maintain water quality such as: forest inventory systems, identification of wet-weather tracts and definitions of acceptable operating conditions

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

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program address wet weather guidance specifically with guidance on annual planning of harvests to accommodate sites that may be more/less impacted by seasonal variations. Consultants conduct monitoring during harvest to ensure water quality standards are being met and contracts allow forestry consultants to suspend operations if water quality issues arise during harvests until favorable conditions are met.



Objective 4. Conservation of Biological Diversity

To maintain or advance the conservation of biological diversity at the stand- and landscape-level and across a diversity of forest and vegetation cover types and successional stages including the conservation of forest plants and animals, aquatic species, threatened and endangered species, Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old-growth forests, and ecologically important sites.

Performance Measure 4.1.

Certified Organizations shall conserve biological diversity. Indicators:

- 1. Program to incorporate the conservation of biological diversity, including native species, wildlife habitats and ecological community types at stand and landscape levels, through the use of best scientific information including the incorporation of research results.

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

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program document provides ample evidence of policies to incorporate conservation of biological diversity. Site visits and field interviews and site specific projects further confirmed that the intention of protection of biological diversity and native species was the driving force on multiple sites.

- 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

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program document describes the requirement to follow forest action plans and wildlife action plans developed by the states to protect natural resources, and each property/project goes through an assessment to determine further implementation guidance based on site specific concerns.

Implementation of this was observed on site through field observations and staff interviews for protecting Long-eared bat habitat and the specific site requirements that the management plan addressed.

- 3. Program to individually and/or through cooperative efforts such as SFI Implementation Committees, support diversity of native forest cover types and age or size classes that enhance biological diversity, by incorporating the results of analysis of documented diversity at landscape and ownership/tenure levels, to ensure the contribution of the managed area to the diversity of conditions that promote biodiversity.

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

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program document outlines efforts to support variety of native forest cover types and ages. TCF takes a passive management approach for forests that are not deemed as productive timber land to be managed for wildlife habitat. Productive forest is managed to protect regional biodiversity including travel corridors and other ecologically significant elements.

- 4. Certified Organizations shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts such as SFI Implementation Committees, participate in or incorporate the results of credible, relevant state, provincial, or regional conservation planning and priority-setting efforts to conserve biological diversity and incorporate the results of these efforts in forest management planning. Credible priority-setting efforts include state and provincial wildlife action plans, state forest action plans, relevant habitat conservation plans, provincial wildlife recovery plans, Indigenous planning processes or ecoregional plans.

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

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program cites the following policy: "The Forest Operations Manager and TCF's forestry consultants regularly review the findings of statewide conservation planning efforts including state Wildlife Action Plans and Forest Action Plans to incorporate those efforts into forest management plan development. These plans are comprehensive management tools developed by state wildlife and forestry agencies in collaboration with many partners to help conserve and enhance each state's full array of forest resources including fish and wildlife species and their habitats. Partners include State Natural Heritage programs, The Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Forest Service, The Academy of Science, university researchers and cooperative extension services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other stakeholders. Wildlife Action Plans identify priority wildlife species, including birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, mollusks and crustaceans, that are targeted for conservation action."

- 5. Program to address conservation of ecologically important species and natural communities.

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



Notes TCF's Forest Management Program document cites that Forest Action Plans and Wildlife Action Plans are used to identify important species and natural communities on project lands. TCF and consultants also review project specific goals to identify other important factors and determine management strategies to conserve these resources.

6. Identification and protection of non-forested wetlands, including bogs, peatlands, fens and marshes, and vernal pools that are ecologically important.

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

Notes Detailed planning process for all new projects with assessment of non-forested areas in Forest Management Program, along with pre-harvest planning and annual monitoring by TCF staff.

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

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

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program cites the following: TCF and its forestry consultants manage every property to minimize the establishment of invasive species. TCF works to control the spread of invasive species when it is ecologically and economically feasible. Contract provisions require the cleaning of logging equipment prior to operating on the property Seed mixes applied for erosion control do not contain invasive species. Known areas of invasive species are monitored for spread potential..

8. Consider the role of natural disturbances, including opening size, structural retention, 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

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program cites the following: We introduce disturbance through timber harvesting, prescribed fire, and other activities to meet management objectives and pursue a desired ecological condition. By mimicking where feasible natural disturbance patterns, we maintain native biodiversity and ecological complexity.

Field site visits to active logging sites demonstrated implementation of these practices with converting plantations to native hardwoods for habitat and creating small disturbance.

Performance Measure 4.2.

Certified Organizations shall protect threatened and endangered species, critically imperiled and imperiled species, and natural communities (Forests with Exceptional Conservation Values), and old-growth forests. Indicators:

1. Program to protect threatened and endangered species.

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

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program includes policies to include RTE research through state and federal natural heritage programs and project partners, who also often can provide management resources to protect species. TCF staff and consultants are aware of presence of RTE and management policies.

Field site visits included project sites specifically designated for RTE of Long eared bat habitat, staff was knowledgeable on management needs and importance of habitat.

2. Program to locate and protect known sites flora and fauna associated with viable occurrences of critically imperiled and imperiled species and ecological communities, defined as Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value. Programs for protection may be developed independently and/or through cooperative efforts involving SFI Implementation Committees and may include Certified Organization managers of SFI-certified organizations, 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

Notes TCF works with state and federal agencies to identify any RTE or other imperiled native species and ecological communities. Natureserve, Natural Heritage Program, and project partners provide spatial data and known occurrences that are all utilized during the planning process for each newly acquired property.

3. Support of and participation in 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



Notes TCF Forest Management Program states that TCF works with state and federal natural resource agencies to identify old-growth forests on properties and highlights them in management plans. They are protected from harvesting in project forest management plans.

Performance Measure 4.3.

Certified Organizations shall manage to protect ecologically important sites in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities. Indicators:

- 1. Use of information such as existing NatureServe or 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

Notes TCF Forest Management Program document cites using NatureServe and state natural heritage data along with spatial data from project partners to identify ecologically sensitive sites.

Multiple site visits confirmed partnerships with community partners and projects were implemented on properties to protect/enhance ecologically important sites or RTE.

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

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

Notes RTE, old-growth, and ecologically sensitive sites are all documented and identified during planning process when properties are acquired and management plans are being developed. Property maps during site visits and staff meetings confirmed detailed mapping and cataloging of important sites.

Performance Measure 4.4.

Certified Organizations shall apply knowledge gained through research, science, technology, field experience and the results of monitoring of the effectiveness of conservation-related programs to manage wildlife habitat and contribute to the conservation of biological diversity. Indicators:

- 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 reputable organizations. 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

Notes TCF staff utilizes a variety of resources including NatureServe and state natural heritage program data to identify key sites and ecological information. Also works with variety of project partners to identify and protect natural resources on properties.

- 2. A program to incorporate data collected, 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

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program cites that TCF incorporates data and research results into conservation planning process with each project. Staff also regularly attend workshops and share new information/research for planning purposes during staff meetings, via email, etc, and new management methods are incorporated when appropriate.

- 3. Individually or collaboratively participate in or support research that demonstrates the conservation outcomes resulting from management strategies.

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

Notes TCF staff regularly attend workshops and may conduct own research on best management methods for conservation efforts on properties, information is shared through staff.



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.

Certified Organizations shall manage the impact of harvesting on visual quality. Indicators:

- 1. Program to address visual quality management.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program document cites that TCF assesses each property during pre-harvest planning to identify the site specific needs for visual buffers and adjacent land management issues.

- 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

Notes Aesthetics buffers are included in some cases, and road layouts, slash management, skid trails, and land use are all taken into consideration when planning harvest operations.

Performance Measure 5.2.

Certified Organizations shall manage the size, shape, and placement of clearcut harvests. Indicators:

- 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

Notes Clearcuts are planned during annual planning to ensure they do not exceed 120 acres, and any areas that have infestations or fires and are clearcut for salvage will be minimized.

- 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

Notes TCF records annual clearcut sizes and identifies clearcuts for the year in each annual planning process, where the average size of clearcuts are calculated.

Performance Measure 5.3.

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

- 1. Program implementing the green-up requirement or alternative methods.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program document has green up policy requiring regeneration plan to be created during harvest planning process. No clearcuts can happen on adjacent properties until clearcut regeneration has reached 3 years or 5 feet high.

Recent clearcut harvest site was visited, harvested in 2022 and had already greened up with full regeneration of desired Aspen community.

- 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

Notes TCF has post-harvest monitoring and site specific FMU data sets record this data annually and is monitored to ensure regeneration success.

- 3. Trees in clearcut harvest areas are at least three years old or five 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 Certified Organization
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes TCF's Forest Management Program requires trees be 3 years old or 5' high before adjacent areas are clearcut and has appropriate measures in place for areas that may be an exception to this rule.

Performance Measure 5.4.

Certified Organizations shall support and promote recreational opportunities for the public. Indicator:



1. Provide recreational opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.
- N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Notes Staff interviews and reviewing forest management plans confirm that recreational opportunities are considered carefully on each property and incorporated into forest management planning.

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.

Certified Organizations shall have a program to identify special sites and manage and protect them in a manner appropriate for their unique features. Indicators:

1. Use of information such as existing natural heritage data, expert advice or stakeholder consultation, or consultation with Indigenous Peoples in identifying or selecting special sites for protection.
- N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Notes Forest management plans include data on natural heritage data, partner spatial and site specific ecological and cultural history and data, and information on Indigenous Peoples of the site. Site visits and staff interviews confirmed strong partnerships with several partners and local agencies with main goal of many properties to protect special sites and natural heritage.

2. Appropriate mapping, cataloging and management of identified special sites.
- N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Notes TCF has extensive mapping database and all reviewed forest management plans have maps showing existence and locations (or absence) of special sites using a variety of databases and information sources for planning process.

Objective 7. Efficient Use of Fiber Resources

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

Performance Measure 7.1.

Certified Organizations shall employ appropriate forest harvesting technology and in-woods manufacturing processes to minimize waste and ensure efficient utilization of forest resources where consistent with other SFI Standard objectives. Indicator:

1. Program or monitoring system to ensure efficient utilization, using provisions such as:
- a. management of harvest residue (such as slash, limbs, tops) considers economic, social and environmental factors (such as 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 (such as bioenergy markets); or
 - d. periodic inspections and reports noting utilization and product separation.
- N/A Conforms Exceeds O.F.I. Minor NC Major NC

Notes Harvest contracts included specific slash management requirements and on site observations confirmed that slash management requirements had been met. TCF utilizes forestry consultants to market wood and maximize utilization for each harvest based on market considerations.



Objective 8. Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples’ Rights

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

Performance Measure 8.1.

Certified Organizations shall recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples’ rights. Indicators:

1. Certified Organizations shall develop and implement a written policy acknowledging a commitment to recognize and respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples. This policy shall provide reference to a program that includes:
 - a. use of available resources and information to identify the Indigenous Peoples whose rights may be affected by the Certified Organization’s forest management activities.
 - b. recognition of the established framework of legal, customary, and traditional rights such as outlined in:
 - i. the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
 - ii. federal, provincial, and state laws and regulations
 - iii. treaties, agreements or other constructive arrangements among governments and Indigenous Peoples.
 - c. appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that the Certified Organization is competent to fulfill their responsibilities under Objective 8 of the Forest Management Standard.

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

Notes TCF utilizes BIA inventory and data to identify important sites and works with tribes to proactively seek input on management of lands as well as makes an effort towards repatriation of indigenous land. TCF acknowledges the principles established by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and the responsibility of federal and state government to meet the “letter” of the declaration.

2. The written policy shall be publicly available.

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

Notes TCF has made a Sustainable Forestry Commitment (TCF-SFI-03) that contains a provision to recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights that is publicly available.

Performance Measure 8.2.

Certified Organizations with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall confer with Indigenous Peoples whose rights may be affected by the Certified Organization’s forest management practices. Indicator:

1. Program that includes communicating with affected Indigenous Peoples to enable Certified Organizations 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;
 - d. communicate through processes that respect their representative institutions, using appropriate protocols;
 - e. provide opportunities to review forest management plans and forest management practices; and
 - f. respond to inquiries and concerns received.

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

Notes Not applicable, TCF does not have forest management responsibilities on public lands.

Performance Measure 8.3.

Certified Organizations are encouraged to communicate with and shall respond to Indigenous Peoples whose rights may be affected by forest management practices on the Certified Organization’s private lands. Indicators:

1. Certified Organizations 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

Notes TCF’s Forest Management Program document cites: If lands of a tribal entity recognized by BIA are located adjacent to or in close proximity to a TCF managed property, the Forest Operations Manager or TCF’s forestry consultant will seek to contact a representative from the community and solicit information to understand the cultural significance of the land. Feedback from the community would be documented and a response provided to any concerns received. TCF provides access to indigenous community members to harvest traditional materials from managed properties when requested.

2. Respond to Indigenous Peoples’ inquiries and concerns received.

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



Notes TCF has a detailed policy included in Forest Management Program document on the process for responding to public comments/inquiries/concerns, which included Indigenous peoples.

Objective 9. Climate Smart Forestry

To ensure forest management activities address climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

Performance Measure 9.1.

Certified Organizations shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving SFI Implementation Committees or other partners identify and address the climate change risks to forests and forest operations and develop appropriate adaptation objectives and strategies. Strategies are based on best scientific information. Indicators:

- 1. Based on best scientific information, Certified Organizations shall identify climate change risks and prioritize them based on the likelihood, nature, severity of their expected impact to their forest lands or forest tenures.

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

Notes Review of TCF Climate Smart Forestry-Risk Assessment and Plan_NMW_NWI confirms requirements are documented.

- 2. Certified Organizations shall develop an adaptation plan to address priority climate change risks, via effective implementation of the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard requirements for potential adaptive management including:
 - a. periodic updates of forest inventory and recalculation of planned harvests as appropriate to account for changes in growth due to productivity increases or decreases, including improved data, long-term drought, fertilization, climate change, or forest health;
 - b. access to growth and yield modeling capabilities;
 - c. documented harvest trends within long-term sustainable levels identified in the forest management plan, and
 - d. appropriate research, testing, evaluation, and deployment of improved planting stock, including varietal seedlings.

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

Notes Review of TCF Climate Smart Forestry-Risk Assessment and Plan_NMW_NWI confirms requirements are documented.

- a. Inventory updated as properties are purchased and maintained with monitoring and harvest data. Business goal is to transition properties for sale with conservation easements established to new owner within 5 year time-frame.
- b. Remsoft’s Woodstock Spatial Optimization software with growth and yield curves created through Lake States variant of the US Forest Service Vegetation Simulator.
- c. Sustainable Harvest Levels documented within each properties Forest Management Plan.
- d. Natural regeneration is utilized for reforestation in California, Maine, Wisconsin, and Minnesota properties; Regeneration on Brunswick Forest in North Carolina is seedlings based on family, soils and other elements.

- 3. Certified Organizations shall document how their adaptation plan objectives and strategies fit within broader regional climate adaptation strategies and plans, where they exist.

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

Notes Interview with Operations Manager and review of TCF Climate Smart Forestry-Risk Assessment and Plan_NMW_NWI documents Regional Climate Adaptation considerations.

- 4. Certified Organizations shall report annually to SFI Inc. their progress towards achieving climate change adaptation strategies and plans.

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

Notes N/A as of audit date. Organization is being audited to new standards in 2022.

Performance Measure 9.2.

Certified Organizations shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving SFI Implementation Committees or other partners identify and address opportunities to mitigate the effects associated with its forest operations on climate change. Indicators:

- 1. Based on best scientific information, Certified Organizations shall identify and address opportunities to enhance the climate benefits associated with forest management operations on the forests they own or manage via effective implementation of the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard requirements such as:



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- a. Objective 2 – Forest Health and Productivity; Objective 10 – Fire Smart Forestry; and/or other silvicultural or operational practices to enhance the climate benefits associated with the forest operations.

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

Notes Review of TCF Climate Smart Forestry-Risk Assessment and Plan_NMW_NWI confirms mitigation of impacts are documented within Forest Strategies and Approaches section and within each Forest Management Plan. Review of SFI Forest Management Program Guidelines (Document #TCF-SFI-01) confirms guidance and documentation to address requirements. Climate Change and Risk Assessment has been developed for each geographic region of its forestland portfolio.

2. Based on best scientific information, Certified Organizations shall identify and address opportunities to enhance ecosystem resilience for the forests they own or manage via effective implementation of the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard requirements including:

- a. prompt reforestation or planned natural reforestation as per Indicator 2.2.1;
- b. adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct understocked areas, and
- c. evaluation for afforestation of areas that are not ecologically important, and
- d. protection of desirable or planned advanced regeneration during harvest and the retention of vigorous trees during partial harvest.

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

Notes Review of TCF Climate Smart Forestry-Risk Assessment and Plan_NMW_NWI:

- a. Reforestation is documented and defined within each Forest Management Plan. Review of properties audited in 2022 confirms. Field site observation confirmed adequate regeneration observed on all field sites with harvesting activity.
- b. Guidelines are documented within Forest Management Plans within Silviculture Guideline sections.
- c. Interview with personnel confirms no afforestation has been conducted since previous audit.
- d. Monitoring is conducted on all harvest operations. Review of monitoring documents and field site observations for all field sites confirmed no adverse impacts to regeneration was identified. All sites were properly designed and harvested by professional qualified personnel.

3. Based on best scientific information, Certified Organizations shall develop a program to identify and address greenhouse gas emissions within their operational control.

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

Notes Review of SFI Forest Management Program Guidelines (Document #TCF-SFI-01) confirms Greenhouse Gas Emissions within Operational Control of TCF identified and documented.

4. Certified Organizations shall report annually to SFI Inc. their measures to mitigate climate change associated with forest operations.

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

Notes N/A-Organization is transitioning to 2022 standards with no previous responsibility to meet requirement.



Objective 10. Fire Resilience and Awareness

To limit susceptibility of forests to undesirable impacts of wildfire and to raise community awareness of fire benefits, risks, and minimization measures.

Performance Measure 10.1.

On the forests they own or manage, Certified Organizations shall limit susceptibility to undesirable impacts of wildfire, promote healthy and resilient forest conditions through management techniques, actions and/or policies, and support restoration of forests following wildfire damage. Indicators:

- 1. Program to evaluate the risk of undesirable impacts of wildfire and the role of fire on the forests they own or manage.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes Review of Forest Management Plan and interviews with TCF personnel confirm respective state Forest Service agencies have jurisdictional control over forest fire responsibility in state of property ownership. Details are documented within Forest Management Plans observed-Pelican River Forest, Northern Minnesota Conservation Lands. Review of SFI Forest Management Program Guidelines (Document #TCF-SFI-01) documents use of Landscape Fire and Resource Management Planning Tool (LANDFIRE) developed by USDA Forest Service and US Department of the Interior during management planning.

- 2. Use of stand and landscape level management techniques, actions and/or policies to promote forest health and resilience, and to mitigate the likelihood of undesirable impacts of wildfire, such as, prescribed fire, cultural burning, thinning, or hazardous fuel reduction where appropriate based on risk.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes Use of LANDFIRE planning tool (identified within 10.1.1) and review of SFI Forest Management Program Guidelines (Section 10.1) confirms fire regimes and management requirements are identified based on wildfire characteristics for each property.

- 3. Use of management techniques to address wildfire damage, mitigate negative impacts to water and soils, and to promote forest restoration and future forest resilience.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes N/A-No impacts of wildfire damages on lands.

Performance Measure 10.2.

Certified Organizations shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving government agencies, SFI Implementation Committees, Project Learning Tree, or other partners, engage in efforts to raise awareness of and take action towards benefits of fire management and minimization of undesirable impacts of wildfire. Indicators:

- 1. Participation in, or support of, local, state, provincial, federal, or Indigenous fire management and prevention programs.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes Review of SFI Forest Management Program Guidelines (Document #TCF-SFI-01) section 12.1 confirms membership within Cooperative Forestry Research Unit. Support for long-term silvicultural research, growth and yield modeling and wildlife monitoring. TCF also supports Maines Center for Research on Sustainable Forests, member of Center for Advanced Forestry Systems (CAFS), Empire State Forest Products Association, Pennsylvania Forest Products Association and Minnesota Forest Resources Council. Personnel are also engaged with Keeping Forests Initiative (collaborative effort of Southern Group of State Foresters, NC State, USFS, USFWS, GA Forestry Association, various industry/conservation and forest landowners) as members of Promoting Forest Products team and Creating Emerging Markets team. TCF also participates in various SFI SIC Committees.

- 2. Participation in, or support of, programs to promote benefits of fire management, and raise awareness about the environmental, economic, and social risks of undesirable impacts of wildfire to values such as carbon emissions, water quality and quantity, air quality, species habitat, public safety, and human health.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes Review of SFI Forest Management Program Guidelines (Document #TCF-SFI-01) section 2.2 outlines policy for working with local firefighting organizations. Section 2.4 confirms coordination with state and rural fire control districts for suppression. Additional evidence is documented within 10.1.1.



Objective 11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance

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

Performance Measure 11.1.

Certified Organizations shall comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and environmental laws and regulations. Indicators:

- 1. Access to relevant laws and regulations.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes Review of SFI Forest Management Program Guidelines (Document #TCF-SFI-01) Objective 11 documents references to applicable federal, state and industry based regulations and policies. Review of Sustainable Forestry Commitment (Revised 8/2/22) confirms commitment to regulations and certification requirements.

- 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

Notes Documented Management System (SFI Forest Management Program Guidelines (Document #TCF-SFI-01), Complaint procedures (section 14.3), contractual requirements with vendors and landowners, harvest monitoring and BMP compliance, use of corrective actions, internal audits, management reviews are utilized as system for compliance.

- 3. Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through available regulatory action information.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes Auditor review of public website interview with TCF personnel, consultants and harvest contractors confirm no regulatory actions pending or active.

Performance Measure 11.2.

Certified Organizations shall comply with all applicable social laws at the federal, provincial, state, and local levels in the country in which the Certified Organization operates. Indicators:

- 1. Written policy demonstrating commitment to comply with social laws, such as those covering civil rights, equal employment opportunities, gender equality, diversity inclusion, 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

Notes Review of Sustainable Forestry Commitment (Revised 8/2/22) confirms compliance.

- 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

Notes Organization maintains system of documented procedures and policies with compliance to regulations documented. Interviews with various personnel and contractors during audit confirmed no issues regarding ILO conventions. No evidence of personnel under age 18. No evidence of compulsory labor. Additional commitment identified within 11.2.1.



Objective 12. Forestry Research, Science and Technology

To invest in research, science, and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based.

Performance Measure 12.1.

Certified Organizations 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 sustainable management of forest resources, and the environmental benefits and performance of forest products. Indicators:

1. Financial or in-kind support of research, collaboratives, or knowledge transfer to address key themes of relevance in the region of operations as identified by Certified Organizations, local stakeholders, communities and/or Indigenous Peoples. Examples could include, but are not limited to, the following topics:
 - a. climate change adaptation and mitigation;
 - b. water quality and quantity;
 - c. biodiversity, Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, and species maintenance and recovery;
 - d. landscape ecology;
 - e. Indigenous traditional forest-related knowledge;
 - f. ecosystem services or non-timber forest products;
 - g. community engagement;
 - h. forest health and productivity;
 - i. support for Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA);
 - j. SFI sponsored conservation research;
 - k. the role of forests in the bioeconomy, and
 - l. or similar themes which build broader understanding of the benefits and effects of sustainable forest management or sustainable supply chains.

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

Notes Organization is member of CFRU(Cooperative Forest Research Unit) is a collaboration of industry and academics/research on forest related issues. (Refer to 10.2.1 for additional evidence). Review of 7/14/2022 invoice confirms financial contributions. TCF maintains membership on Maine SIC, Minnesota SIC and Wisconsin SIC committees. Review of invoices for the respective states confirm. TCF also maintains financial support of Georgia Forestry Association, Empire State (NY) Forest Products Association, Maine Forest Products Council and Pennsylvania Forest Products Association by review of invoices for each.

2. Ensure that knowledge gained through research is shared, to the extent possible, to positively influence sustainable forest management.

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

Notes Review of training records for Operations Managers confirms variety of silvicultural, wildlife habitat management, technology, herbicide and water quality, forest modeling and native lands were attended. Records are maintained and organized by attendance, dates and courses. Training conducted on August 18, 2022 with agenda (Overview of SFI Program), copy of the SFI 2022 standards, changes to standard, timber harvesting and review of SFI Forest Management Guidelines (Document #TCF-SFI-01). Attendance is documented.

Performance Measure 12.2.

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

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 of information such as:
 - a. regeneration assessments;
 - b. growth and drain assessments;
 - c. best management practices implementation and conformance;
 - d. biodiversity conservation information for family forest owners;
 - e. social, cultural, or economic benefit assessments; and
 - f. landscape-scale biodiversity assessments which clarify the contributory role of sustainable forest management.

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



Notes Review of ME SIC Meeting Agenda's for 6/1/22, 9/7/22; Georgia SIC 11/9/22; Wisconsin SIC 7/12/22d and Minnesota SIC 6/29/22 confirm membership and attendance by TCF personnel. SIC committees assist in the development of Best Management Practices and qualified logger training requirements and classes. SIC committees are also engaging in the development of biodiversity assessments for compliance with 2022 SFI Standards and rules.

Objective 13. Training and Education

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

Performance Measure 13.1.

Certified Organizations shall require appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities under the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard. Indicators:

- 1. Written statement of commitment to the SFI 2022 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

Notes Review of Sustainable Forestry Commitment (Document #TCF-SFI-03) confirms compliance to SFI requirements. SFI Commitment memo sent to TCF personnel on 8/2/22 from Legal Manager.

- 2. Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard objectives.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes Review of Staff Training Matrix (Document #TCF-SFI-07) confirms training requirements based on roles and responsibilities.

- 3. Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes Interview with (2) Operations Managers and Associate State Director confirms knowledge of certification requirements, execution of forest management monitoring, significant knowledge of forest management practices, prescriptions and silviculture management for forest cover types. Organization has also demonstrated use of resources for protection of rare/threatened/endangered species of flora and fauna. Protection of water resources and use of prevalent logging practices to ensure protection of residual forest stands and habitats.

- 4. Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes Contractors are required to complete state Qualified Logger Training by contractual obligation. Auditor review of all active/completed harvest operations within past 12 months confirmed valid training records were available.

- 5. Certified Organizations shall have written agreements for the use of qualified logging professionals, or wood producers that have completed training programs and are recognized as qualified logging professionals and/or certified logging companies.
 - N/A
 - Conforms
 - Exceeds
 - O.F.I.
 - Minor NC
 - Major NC

Notes Review of Agreements and Contracts confirm requirements for use of state qualified logging professionals are documented. Review of Contractor Correspondence & Contract Provisions (Document #TCF-SFI-05) dated 8/2/22 confirms requirements for use of qualified logging professionals submitted to consultants and forestland managers.

Performance Measure 13.2.

Certified Organizations shall work individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving 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 specific to qualified logging professionals. Indicators:

- 1. Participation in or support of SFI Implementation Committees to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for wood producer core training courses that allow individuals to attain qualified logging professional status. These criteria shall address at least the following:
 - a. awareness of sustainable forestry principles and SFI's work across four pillars: standards, conservation, community, and education;
 - b. best management practices, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance, and retirement;
 - c. awareness of responsibilities under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, the Canadian Species at Risk Act, Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (critically imperiled and imperiled species and ecological communities), and other measures to protect biodiversity and wildlife habitat;



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- d. logging safety;
- e. 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, and
- f. other topics identified by Certified Organizations and/or SFI Implementation Committees that improve their responsibilities in meeting the SFI 2022 standards.

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

Notes Review of ME SIC Meeting Agenda's for 6/1/22, 9/7/22; Georgia SIC 11/9/22; Wisconsin SIC 7/12/22d and Minnesota SIC 6/29/22 confirm membership and attendance by TCF personnel. SIC committees assist in the development of Best Management Practices and qualified logger training requirements and classes. SIC committees are also engaging in the development of biodiversity assessments for compliance with 2022 SFI Standards and rules.

2. Participation in or support of SFI Implementation Committees to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for wood producer continuing education training courses that shall be taken by qualified logging professionals at least once every two years to maintain their status. The continuing education training course(s) shall address one or more of the following topics:
 - a. awareness of sustainable forestry principles and SFI's work across four pillars: standards, conservation, community, and education;
 - b. best management practices, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance, and retirement;
 - c. reforestation, invasive species management, forest resource conservation, aesthetics and special sites;
 - d. awareness of rare forested natural communities as identified by provincial or state agencies, or by credible organizations such as NatureServe and The Nature Conservancy;
 - e. transportation issues;
 - f. business management;
 - g. public policy and outreach;
 - h. awareness of emerging technologies;
 - i. logging safety; or
 - j. other topics identified by Certified Organization and/or SFI Implementation Committees that improve their responsibilities in meeting the SFI 2022 Standards.

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

Notes Review of Certified Logging Professional [website](#) (ME) confirms requirements for re-certification the year after initial certification and every two years thereafter. Topics addressed include requirements of a-d.



Objective 14. 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 14.1.

Certified Organizations 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:

- 1. Support, including financial, for efforts of SFI Implementation Committees.

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

Notes Review of ME SIC Meeting Agenda’s for 6/1/22, 9/7/22; Georgia SIC 11/9/22; Wisconsin SIC 7/12/22d and Minnesota SIC 6/29/22 confirm membership and attendance by TCF personnel. SIC committees assist in the development of Best Management Practices and qualified logger training requirements and classes. SIC committees are also engaging in the development of biodiversity assessments for compliance with 2022 SFI Standards and rules.

- 2. Support, individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving SFI Implementation Committees, 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 species;
 - g. characteristics of special sites; and
 - h. reduction of wildfire risk;
 - i. use of qualified logging professionals, qualified resource professionals and/or certified logging companies;
 - j. awareness of SFI, and
 - k. reporting of inconsistent practices.
- 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, conservation easements federal, state, or provincial cost share programs, or SFI Conservation Grants.

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

Notes 2. Review of SFI Maine [website](#) confirms resources available for items within a-k.
3. Membership within Maine SIC, Maine Forest Products Council, Wisconsin SIC, Georgia Forestry Association and others identified within 12.1.1 confirms support for current use tax program.

Performance Measure 14.2.

Certified Organizations shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving SFI Implementation Committees support and promote, at the state, provincial or other appropriate levels, mechanisms for public outreach, education and involvement related to sustainable forest management. Indicator:

- 1. Periodic educational opportunities for the public 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 national, state, provincial, and local forestry organizations and soil and water conservation districts.
 - f. engagement and support of teachers and/or students through programs such as Project Learning Tree.

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

Notes Review of ME SIC Meeting Agenda’s for 6/1/22, 9/7/22; Georgia SIC 11/9/22; Wisconsin SIC 7/12/22d and Minnesota SIC 6/29/22 confirm membership and attendance by TCF personnel. SIC committees assist in the development of Best



Management Practices and qualified logger training requirements and classes. SIC committees are also engaging in the development of biodiversity assessments for compliance with 2022 SFI Standards and rules, maintain inconsistent practices records for non-compliance issues in their respective states and provide educational materials for landowners available to members.

Performance Measure 14.3.

Certified Organizations shall, individually and/or through cooperative efforts including SFI Implementation Committees, establish, at the state, provincial, or other appropriate levels, procedures to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, unions, stakeholders, the public or other Certified Organizations regarding management that appears inconsistent with the SFI standards principles and objectives. Indicators:

- 1. Support for SFI Implementation Committees (e.g., toll-free numbers and other efforts) to address concerns about apparent nonconformance.

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

Notes Review of ME SIC Meeting Agenda’s for 6/1/22, 9/7/22; Georgia SIC 11/9/22; Wisconsin SIC 7/12/22d and Minnesota SIC 6/29/22 confirm membership and attendance by TCF personnel. SIC committees assist in the development of Best Management Practices and qualified logger training requirements and classes. SIC committees are also engaging in the development of biodiversity assessments for compliance with 2022 SFI Standards and rules, maintain inconsistent practices records for non-compliance issues in their respective states and provide educational materials for landowners available to members. SIC Committee has Inconsistent Practices Hotline on (Maine) [website](#).

- 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

Notes Interview with Operations Managers (2), Associate State Director Conservation and Acquisition (MN) and harvest contractors confirms no complaints have been received regarding forest management or harvesting operations. Auditor review of internet confirms no complaints were documented or adverse conditions observed in field.

Objective 15: Public Land Management Responsibilities

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on public lands.

Performance Measure 15.1.

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

- 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

Notes No public land management.

- 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

Notes No public land management.



Objective 16. Communications and Public Reporting

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

Performance Measure 16.1.

A Certified Organization 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 2022 Forest Management Standard. Indicator:

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

The summary audit report will be posted on the SFI Inc. website for public review.

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

Notes Public Summary Audit posted on SFI [website](#) for 2017 (recertification audit) and 2021 (surveillance audit).

Performance Measure 16.2.

Certified Organizations shall report annually to SFI Inc. on their conformance with the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard. Indicators:

1. Prompt response to the SFI annual progress report survey.

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

Notes Review of SFI Annual Progress Report (APR) submitted on 8/16/22. Report filing was delayed until 8/31/2022 for new SFI standards.

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

Notes Organization maintains infrastructure through GIS, Forest Management Plans, documented set of policies and procedures and evidence reviewed during audit, maintenance of previous Annual Progress Reports. Interview of personnel confirms knowledge of Management Plan, field and monitoring requirements and other elements required to meet certification requirements.

3. Maintenance of copies of past survey reports to document progress and improvements to demonstrate conformance to the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard.

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

Notes Review of historical APR maintained electronically by year and observed by auditor. Review of documents back to 2020 observed by auditor.



Objective 17. 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 17.1.

Certified Organizations shall establish a management review system to examine findings and progress in implementing the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard, to make appropriate improvements in programs, and to inform their employees of changes.

Indicators:

- 1. System to review commitments, programs, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.

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

Notes Organization has completed internal audits on land management units. Auditor observation of internal audit for White Pine (ME) and Pelican River (WI) properties with no non-conformances identified. Date of audit listed within revision of form on 8/15/22. Review of SFI FM Program Guidelines (Document #TCF-SFI-01) confirms requirements documented.

- 2. System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard objectives and performance measures, including measures to reduce the negative impacts from forest management operations.

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

Notes Review of SFI FM Program Guidelines (Document #TCF-SFI-01) confirms system for compliance is documented including internal audits and management reviews.

- 3. Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve conformance to the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard.

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

Notes Progress is reviewed quarterly based on the management system of the organization. Auditor review of Management Review conducted on 9/13/22. Attendance is documented and Action Items are identified for continual improvement requirements.



Appendix 3

The Conservation Fund 2022 SFI® Forest Management Public Summary Audit

Introduction

The SFI Program of The Conservation Fund of Chapel Hill, North Carolina has demonstrated conformance to SFI® 2022 Forest Management Standard in accordance with the NSF certification process.

NSF International initially certified The Conservation Fund on July 1, 2007, and recertified the program in 2012 and in 2015, when organization was re-certified to the new SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard requirements. In 2017 the audit was designed to review all of the requirements in order to recertify the program and align it with another certification. This report describes the 2022 Recertification Audit designed to review the operation of their program against the SFI 2022 Standard and Rules, Section 2 – Forest Management Standard requirements. The audit included a review of lands in North Carolina, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Maine and North Coast California properties, comprising 9 of the 50 named properties making up the program.

Program Background

The Conservation Fund's certified land base includes most portions of its Working Forest Fund, excluding lands slated for sale over the short term. Almost all of the forestlands will be encumbered with working forest conservation easements to ensure long-term forest management and conservation, or will be sold in fee to State, Federal or other conservation partners committed to the management of working forestland. The Forest Management General Strategy is described in the Working Forest Fund Policy Digest:

the following strategic goals will be consistent across every Working Forest Fund project:

- 1) Create a sustainable forestry project that is economically self-supporting and contributes to the state and local economy; while respecting all workers, members of the community, and indigenous people;
- 2) Perpetuate a healthy and productive forest by maintaining vegetative and structural diversity, supporting ecological resilience, and limiting the introduction and spread of invasive and exotic plant species;
- 3) Maintain water quality and protect the riparian and aquatic ecosystems supported by healthy, intact forestland;
- 4) Provide a sustainable source of forest products as is consistent with the long-term conservation of the property;
- 5) Enhance the wildlife habitat value of the forest by providing a range of successional stages across the landscape;
- 6) Promote timber harvesting practices that are aesthetically compatible with the local landscape;
- 7) Contribute to the local economy through forest jobs, forest products, and compatible outdoor recreation opportunities
- 8) Implement land management strategies that will result in the Property being eligible for forest certification by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and/or the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI).

The program's North Coast Forest Conservation Program in California includes 73,613 acres of working forestland in five major tracts located in the coastal portion of Mendocino and Sonoma Counties, California. These forests support second and third growth stands of coastal redwood, Douglas-fir, pine, and related species, with some areas of oak prairie and pygmy cypress trees. The forests are generally road accessible, blocked in, and provide an opportunity for demonstrating the conservation of aquatic and upland resources in a working-forest context.

Beyond California, the certified portions of the Working Forest Fund and other certified parcels consist of properties totaling 434,970 acres in Alabama, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Tennessee.

The management objectives are summarized in this paragraph from one representative Forest Management Plan:

- Perpetuate a healthy and productive forest by maintaining vegetative and structural diversity, supporting ecological resilience, and limiting the introduction and spread of invasive and exotic plant species.
- Maintain water quality and protect the riparian and aquatic ecosystems supported by healthy, intact forestland
- Provide a sustainable source of forest products as is consistent with the long-term



conservation of the property

- Enhance the wildlife habitat value of the forest by providing a range of successional stages across the landscape
- Comply with all certification principles promulgated by the Sustainable Forest Initiative
- Promote timber harvesting practices that are aesthetically compatible with the local Landscape
- Create and maintain positive, viable collaborations with other landowners to achieve individual and common objectives across the landscape
- Contribute to the local economy through the creation of forest jobs, forest products, and compatible outdoor recreation opportunities.

Source: Pelican River Forest Management Plan

The Conservation Fund’s SFI Program is managed by Brian Schneider, Forest Operations Manager and Jenna Schreiber, Forest Operations Manager.

The audit was performed by NSF on 16-18 August; 30 August-September 2; 14 September; 9 November and closing meeting was conducted on 18 November 2022. The audit team was headed by Shannon Wilks, Lead Auditor; Michelle Matteo, Team Auditor and Mallore Weinheimer, Team Auditor. Audit team members fulfill the qualification criteria for conducting audits contained in SFI 2022 Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation.

The objective of the audit was to assess conformance of the organization’s SFI Program to the requirements of the SFI 2022 Standards and Rules, Section 2 Forest Management Standard.

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

The SFI Standard was used without modifying any requirements. The following indicators are not applicable:

Indicator 2.1.3	Plantings of native or non-invasive naturalized tree species are preferred. In exceptional circumstances where exotic tree species are being planted, they should not increase risk to native ecosystems.	No exotic tree species are planted.
Indicator 2.2.5	The World Health Organization (WHO) type 1A and 1B pesticides shall be prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available.	No use of prohibited pesticides.
Performance Measure 8.2	Certified Organizations with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall confer with Indigenous Peoples whose rights may be affected by the Certified Organization’s forest management practices. Indicator:	No Public Land Management Responsibilities.
Objective 15	To participate and implement sustainable forest management on public lands.	No Public Land Management Responsibilities.



Audit Process

NSF initiated the audit process with a series of planning calls to confirm the scope of the audit, review the SFI Indicators and evidence to be used to assess conformance, verify that The Conservation Fund was prepared to proceed to the Recertification Audit, and to prepare a detailed audit plan. The audit was governed by a detailed audit plan designed to enable the audit team to efficiently determine conformance with the applicable requirements. The plan provided for the assembly and review of audit evidence consisting of documents, interviews, and on-site inspections of ongoing or completed forest practices.

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

The possible findings of the audit included conformance, major non-conformance, minor non-conformance, opportunities for improvement, and practices that exceeded the requirements of the standard.

Overview of Audit Findings

The Conservation Fund was found to be in conformance with the standard. NSF determined that there were no non-conformances or opportunities for improvement identified:

General Description of Conformity to SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard Objectives

A summary of the evidence of the organization's conformance to the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard Objectives follows:

Objective 1. Forest Management Planning

To ensure forest management plans include long-term sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid forest conversion or afforestation of ecologically important areas.

Why it Matters: Ensures that we grow more trees than we harvest, guaranteeing that forests will last for future generations.

Notes: Detailed Management Plans were reviewed for all properties audited in 2022. Plans were detailed and all requirements of standard was documented. Sustainable harvest levels are documented with credible models utilized for growth analysis.

Objective 2. Forest Health and Productivity

To ensure long-term forest productivity and conservation of forest resources through prompt reforestation, afforestation, deploying integrated pest management strategies, minimized chemical use, soil conservation, and protecting forests from damaging agents.

Why it Matters: Ensures that forests remain healthy and resilient which means better forest productivity including providing a reliable and renewable source of sustainably managed fiber for consumer products.

Notes: Review of Forest Management Plans and field sites confirmed healthy and productive forests. Regeneration was confirmed with adequate stocking. Soils were identified and protected during forest management activities. No adverse impacts were observed. The Conservation Fund has a documented system to ensure forest health and productivity.

Objective 3. Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources

To protect the water quality and water quantity of rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, and other water bodies.

Why it Matters: Protects water quality and quantity helps provide safe and abundant drinking water for all.

Notes: Review of Forest Management Plans, Timber Harvesting prescriptions and observations during field sites confirmed significant protections are utilized for water within certified lands. Buffers are established and use of harvest debris was observed to prevent soil movement.

Objective 4. Conservation of Biological Diversity

To maintain or advance the conservation of biological diversity at the stand- and landscape-level and across a diversity of forest and vegetation cover types and successional stages including the conservation of forest plants and animals, aquatic species, threatened and endangered species, Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old-growth forests and ecologically important sites.



Why it Matters: Ensures that forests are managed to protect wildlife habitat and conserve biological diversity.

Notes: Review of Forest Management Plans confirms documented guidelines for the protection and maintenance of native forest cover-types. Landscape level planning and research into State Forest Action Plans and Wildlife Action Plans are conducted to ensure best available information is utilized. Review of all field sites confirmed protection of species diversity and native vegetation during all forest management activities.

Objective 5. Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits

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

Why it Matters: Ensures that the public can continue to enjoy the aesthetic values and recreation opportunities of forests.

Notes: Review of all field sites confirmed professional forest management operations were implemented in accordance with Forest Management Plans. Buffers are utilized on high visibility sites. Recreation is considered on all properties.

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.

Why it Matters: Protects special sites that have important geological or cultural values.

Notes: Review of all Forest Management Plans contain requirements for the Protection of Special Sites. Special Management Areas are designated for the protection of rare, threatened or endangered species. Observation during field sites confirmed protection of vulnerable plant species.

Objective 7. Efficient Use of Fiber Resources

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

Why it Matters: Ensures the economic well-being of communities that live and work near forests.

Notes: Review of all field sites confirmed active monitoring and use of documented contracts for harvesting of wood fiber. Protection of residual trees and utilization of fiber was confirmed on all harvest operation sites observed.

Objective 8. Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights

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

Why it Matters: Recognizing and respecting the Indigenous Peoples' rights supports relationship building and shared benefits from sustainably managed forests.

Notes: Review of TCF Policies and Procedures confirmed requirements to respect and recognize Indigenous Peoples rights. Commitment is documented within Sustainable Forestry Commitment. Credible sources are reviewed to ensure the protection of cultural and archaeological sites if applicable.

Objective 9: Climate Smart Forestry

To ensure forest management activities address climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

Why it Matters: Ensures that SFI-certified forests make an important contribution to addressing the effects of climate change.

Notes: Review of Climate Smart Forestry Risk Assessments confirmed complex set of procedures have been developed and greenhouse gases within operational control have been identified. Climate Change and Risk Assessment has been developed for each geographic region of forestland portfolio.

Objective 10. Fire Resilience and Awareness

To limit susceptibility of forests to undesirable impacts of wildfire and to raise community awareness of fire benefits, risks, and minimization measures.

Why It Matters: Ensures that forests are managed proactively relative to fire risk in the face of climate change, so that they can continue to store carbon, provide habitat for wildlife, and are a source of clean air and water while protecting public safety and human health.

Notes: Review of SFI Forest Management Program Guidelines confirms fire regimes and management requirements are identified based on wildfire characteristics for each property. TCF utilizes Landscape Fire and Resource Planning Tool developed by US Forest Service and Department of Interior during management planning.



Objective 11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance

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

Why it Matters: Compliance with all laws ensures the protection of the environmental and social values of forests.

Notes: Review of SFI Forest Management Program Guidelines documents references to applicable federal, state and industry based regulations and policies. Review of Sustainable Forestry Commitment confirms commitment to regulations and certification requirements. No regulatory actions were identified during field sites.

Objective 12. Forestry Research, Science and Technology

To invest in research, science, and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based.

Why it Matters: Forest research means healthier, more productive forests.

Notes: Active memberships in research cooperatives, state forestry associations and SIC Committee were confirmed. Organization has membership on multiple State SIC committees. Documented attendance, agendas and invoices were reviewed during audit.

Objective 13. Training and Education

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

Why it Matters: Training and educating foresters means forest management plans are more accurately implemented, ensuring the well-being of our forests.

Notes: Interviews with TCF personnel and review of all harvest contractor records confirmed professional and trained personnel implementing forest management activities. Contracts are utilized with compliance language documented. Membership on SIC committees provides guidance for logger training topics and requirements.

Objective 14. 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.

Why it Matters: Outreach and education improves the public's understanding of how important sustainable forestry is to local and global issues.

Notes: Organization maintains membership on multiple state forestry and wood products associations. Resources are developed for education of landowners through various state forestry and SIC committees. State SIC committees are developing biodiversity materials for landowner education in coordination with revised SFI certification standards. Active membership on SIC Committees confirmed during audit.

Objective 15. Public Land Management Responsibilities

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on public lands.

Why it Matters: Protects the environmental, social, and economic values of public forests.

Notes: Not Applicable

Objective 16. Communications and Public Reporting

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

Why it Matters: Reporting the results of third-party audits increases the public's understanding of forest certification.

Notes: Review of SFI website confirms public summary reports are available for previous audit. Annual Progress Report was submitted prior to deadline.

Objective 17. Management Review and Continual Improvement

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

Why it Matters: Encourages continual improvement of sustainable forestry practices, a cornerstone of sustainable forestry.

Notes: Review of certification guidelines, policies, commitments, internal audits and quarterly management reviews confirmed compliance to SFI requirements.



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Contact Information

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Appendix 4

The Conservation Fund

SFI FM Audit-NC

8/17/22

Shannon Wilks

Properties in NC All contained contracts with compliance to BMPs, regulations and requirements for qualified logging professional language. Observed weekly and final monitoring reports. Threatened and Endangered Species checks were reviewed for all sites and evidenced by documents. All ground conditions matched harvesting plans, inspections and maps. Gated access on non-public entry areas. Herbaceous weed control conducted in 2021 by NC Applicator License 026-3683.

Attendees:

Jenna Schreiber, TCF Operations Manager

Brant McClary-Gelbert, Fulbright & Randolph Forestry Consultants

Stephen Bazemore, GFR Forest Consultants

- Brunswick Forest-3,688 acres: Review of Management Plan (updated in August 2022) contain Conservation easement placed on forest in 2018 for working forest and prevent development or conversion to non-forest use. Special Management Areas (SPA) are designated within block. The SPA contained rare, threatened and endangered species of flora and fauna. Four primary areas are designated as SPA: Riparian Corridor Protection (~64 acres), Intact Wetland Natural Communities (~91 acres), Longleaf Pine Community Elements (~194 acres) and Atlantic White Cedar Communities (~50 acres). Restrictions within the SPA designated areas are noted within Management Plan. Land is leased for recreational hunting. Low coastal plain topography.
- Brunswick Forest-78.9 acre harvest cut of pine stand that has been sold but not harvested. Sale sold in 2021. Requirements for NC Top Logger within contract. North Carolina TOP Logger #9277 purchased tract. No crossings on site. Boundary with adjacent hardwood stand flagged in pink on road and painted orange. Low area protected and no flowing water observed. Review of NHI database during sale planning. Identification of habitat for Indigo Bush noted. Ground survey conducted by GFR personnel but no evidence found. Management for habitat during harvesting done on pre harvest checklist with contractor and buyer.



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- Venus Flytrap observed adjacent to public road on property. Protection is not publicized location.



- Culvert replacement on access road shared with Molphus Timber. Two prior major rain events due to hurricanes impacted crossing. Rock placed on approaches with no evidence of soil movement. Culvert was strapped with steel for secure placement. Replacement occurred in Q2/Q3 2021.



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- Longleaf Special Management Area- 17 acre planted in winter if 2015-2016. Herbaceous weed control with little effect. Prescribed burn in 2017. Replanted/inter planted in winter if 2017/2018. Consideration during fires for adjacent stands with high risk organic fuels in loblolly stands. Prescribed fire contract has been issued on parcel, but awaiting correct weather conditions. Stands are blocked and various tracts planted in Longleaf. Minimum 50 acres are required within Conservation Easement. Goal to historical return to Longleaf savanna with frequent fires to maintain habitat.



- Brunswick Forest- Stand is approximately 20 years old. First Thinning and harvest cut sale. Harvest contractor-NC TOP #2901. Sale monitoring observed with final harvesting activity being recorded in



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January 2022. Sale is not complete. Contractor was noted to pick up remaining stems in deck, but wet conditions prevented access. Minor amount of pine pulpwood stems was observed. Thinning prescription of thinning every fourth row with some inferior trees within retention rows. Thinned to 75 basal area. Minimal damage to residual stand. Dominant trees retained. No evidence of trespass or hydrocarbon spills. No soil compaction or rutting observed. Interview with GFR personnel confirmed weekly monitoring of activity. Excellent knowledge of management for protection of soils and root system of residual stands communicated through audit. Harvest cut area is not complete at time of audit. Plan to reforest after harvesting is completed. Bedding or container seedlings recommended due to wet nature of stand. No crossings or water features on stand. Adjacent ditches along access road. Buffer of non-merchantable stems observed. No rutting or soil compaction observed. Low area with hardwood and juniper protected from harvesting activity.



The Conservation Fund

SFI FM Audit-NC



Only those documents viewed through NSF applications are officially controlled. All other copies, whether viewed through another computer program or a printed version, are not controlled and therefore NSF assumes no responsibility for accuracy of the document.

8/18/22

Shannon Wilks

Attendees:

Jenna Schreiber, TCF Operations Manager

- Reeves Jackson Conservation Property consisting of 1,274 acres in NC. Review of management plan confirms no management activities planned for site. Intent is to transfer ownership of property to USFWS or state of North Carolina. Annual monitoring of site is conducted. Site is designated as HCVF (High Conservation Value Forest). Primary purpose is protection of RTE habitat, including Red Cockaded Woodpecker, American Alligator and Bald Eagle. Boundaries painted red. No evidence of management activity or trespass observed. Lower coastal plain with significant back-water basins and sloughs. No evidence of RCW or Bald Eagle nests observed during audit. Access for exploration was limited due to water. Some remnant structures were observed. TCF personnel are in process with state of NC for removal. Gated access with some evidence of hunting observed. Site had received an annual HCVF Monitoring from TCF personnel on 2/15/22. Historical records of monitoring were observed from 2018-present. Management plan available, RTE species identified, soils, water features and roads depicted on maps or within GIS system.



The Conservation Fund

SFI FM Audit-WI

8/30/22

Shannon Wilks, SFI Lead Auditor

Mallore Weinheimer, SFI Team Auditor



Attendees:

Brian Schneider, TCF Operations Manager

Bill Gibson, Independent security on Pelican River Forest (Retired USFS Law Enforcement)

Nick Snyder, Compass Land Consultants

Mike Lempel, Forwarder Operator-Mike Lempel WI MTH

Shawn Gilligan, Paul Cleerman Logging-Foreman

Pelican River Forest (PRF)consisting of 69,539 acres in Langlade and Oneida Counties of Wisconsin. Property is enrolled within Wisconsin DNR Managed Forest Law program. Working forest fund with 10 year planning horizon (2022-2032). Property acquired in May 2021. TCF has encumbered 12,514 acres in Oneida County with a working forest conservation easement held by Wisconsin, through WI DNR. First phase of planned two phase conservation strategy for remainder of property. Remainder of property will be encumbered with similar easement held by Wisconsin through Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program and US Forest Service Legacy program, through Land and Water Conservation Fund. Goal of easements stated within management plan. Property has been designated as "open" within MFL program. Recreation activities are open for public use. No G1/G2 species or communities identified on property during review of WIDNR Natural Heritage program. Potential Native American villages on Pelican Lake-information provided by local stakeholder but not yet confirmed by state Archaeologist. Management plans for all sites with maps, soils, landscape, biodiversity and forest inventory/sustainable harvest levels reviewed. Cameras utilized for security. No active actions at time of audit. Review of harvest contracts confirm requirements for BMP's and appendix utilized for qualified logger training. No use of chemicals confirmed on PRF. Variety of habitat managed for grouse, deer and hawks. Stand level and landscape views for habitat. Landscape management for bears and wolves. Contiguous block adjacent to State and Federal lands. No firewood cutting allowed on property due to liability.

- Quaker-Project #361116-1: 16 acres harvested by Paul Cleerman Logging (WI MTH). Final harvest of dominant canopy of quaking aspen. Retention of mast and snag trees/cavity trees marked with red paint. Goal is regeneration of mixed species stand, primarily quaking aspen. No crossings identified on stand. Southern boundary is forested wetland. Visual buffer to minimize harvest impact adjacent to US-45 public road. NHI and Archaeological review conducted on 3/14 & 3/15/22 with no occurrences identified. Weekly inspection on active harvest operation. Monitoring of wood utilization is done during inspections. Sale boundaries painted red. Mast trees observed for retention. Sale completed in Q2-2022. No evidence of trash or trespass. No awareness of significant invasive species on parcel. Significant regeneration of stand. Harvesting of mature stand planned in 45-50 years.



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- Longshot-Project #361110-1: 120 acres harvested by Paul Cleerman Logging (WI MTH). Single tree selection harvest within Northern Hardwood stand. NHI reviewed on 3/10/22; Archaeological review conducted on 3/1/22. No occurrences were identified. Performance bond required at contract execution. Orange marked trees harvested. Trees marked in red and blue (boundary) are to be retained. Snags retained if not hazardous. Stand boundary is painted red. Natural regeneration of hardwoods planned. No crossings identified or observed. Harvest is dormant but not completed. Last inspection was Q2-2022.



- Culvert replacement on access roads. Rock placed on approaches with no evidence of soil movement observed. Water drainage for spring thaw with no permits required. Installed Q2-2022.



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- Sandwich-Project #361206-1: 189 acres harvested by Paul Cleerman Logging (WI MTH). Single tree selection within un-even aged stand of northern hardwood. All trees marked in green paint will be removed. Retention of snags, mast and trees with wildlife potential retained. No stream crossings on site. Southern boundary borders forested wetland. Buffer of riparian zone marked with red paint. Review of NHI and Archaeological on 1/16/18. State species of concern (bird) and other was identified. No suitable habitat on site confirmed. No historical or cultural occurrences identified. Minimal damage to residual stand. Harvest completed on property in Q3-2022. Hauling of wood decked is still required. Monitoring report observed with no issues identified. Map is color-coded based on site monitoring and completion of areas within stand. Scattered tops on site, snow loads usually compact in winter. Retained stems protected and minimal damage observed. Quality professional harvest job observed. No trash or trespass observed. Stands matched maps and management plan. Retained wildlife trees within stand.





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- Monico Creek-Project #371136-1: (Active Harvest Operation) 234 Acres harvested by Paul Cleerman Logging (WI MTH). Five (5) harvest units. Single tree selection and harvest-cut areas. Goal is to open stand for regeneration of understory species. Marked trees with purple paint. Retain snags, mast trees and wildlife potential trees. No stream crossings within harvest areas. Review of NHI on 1/18/22-State species of concern identified. Harvesting activities are outside of avoidance period identified. No archaeological or cultural occurrences. Observed spruce harvest cut area on stand. Boundary defined with red painted retention trees for wildlife. Job foreman confirmed higher wolf population within area. Approximately 80% of stand to be harvested.



TCF SFI Audit Notes-MW

Tuesday, 8/30/22

Pelican River, WI Field Site Visits

Attendees:

Brian Schneider (TCF), Nick Snyder (CLC)

NSF: Shannon Wilks, Mallorie Weinheimer

Summary:

Field site visits with Brian Schneider (TCF) and Nick Snyder (CLC) to four different field sites, listed below. Harvest sale prep plan, harvest map including inspection dates, harvest contract and sale, and post-harvest inspection report included for each site in packet information included for each site in the Pelican River Area. Harvest information packets included detailed information on sites including water resources, climate change considerations, invasive species, FECV, aesthetics, cultural site information, soils, regulatory, and logger qualifications. Same operator, Paul Cleerman Logging LLC, was used for all harvests and is a certified Wisconsin Master Logger. No chemical applications on any of the sites.



Site 1: Quaker #361116-1

16 acre clearcut to encourage Aspen regeneration through coppicing completed spring 2022.

Regeneration of aspen already evident and successful across site.

No observation of invasive species, none cited by Nick Snyder. No problems reported with harvest.

Pre-harvest plan reviewed, harvest discussed with both Brian and Nick, everything aligned with harvest plan and interviews in field.

Bill Gibson, security contractor for Pelican River met us on site and went over his role monitoring roads and access issues. Main issues were ATV access and dumping. Cameras installed throughout property. Public access is allowed for recreation.

Harvest sale prep plan, harvest map including inspection dates, harvest contract and sale, and post-harvest inspection report included for each site in packet information included.

Site 2: Longshot #361110-1

120 acres single tree selection harvest completed June 2022.

Nick Snyder discussed harvest and specific goal of Sugar maple regeneration on site. No issues with harvest observed or noted by Nick. On site field visit verified harvest goals of increasing spacing and decreasing basal area across diameter classes while leaving healthiest mix of representative native species. Wildlife and habitat trees were left and marked with red paint. Nick was very knowledgeable about the harvest.

Site 2a: Culvert Replacement

Stopped to view culvert replacement along road. Culvert was replaced in spring 2022. Old metal culvert was left on site to continue rusting/decomposing. New culvert appeared to be effective with no obstructions, 4"+ gravel around it, and had been installed seamlessly into road. No issues.

Site 3: Sandwich #361206-1



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189 acres single tree selection harvest completed 2022, some timber still stacked in log decks yet to be removed. Field visit confirmed similar treatment and results as Longshot site visit, harvest looked good.



State species of concern occurrences were noted in harvest prep plan. Field interview with Nick Snyder said that the site was reviewed after occurrence found and no appropriate habitat was found. No streams noted, none in plan, and none viewed. All harvest plan details and interviews on site aligned. No complaints from public or involved contractors.

Site 4: Monico Creek #371136-1

Mixed harvest of clearcut and single tree selection of 234 acres, currently in progress and targeted to end in February 2023. Clearcuts targeted to remove planted stands of White spruce, which were planted by previous landowner and encourage natural regeneration of aspen and hardwoods on site. Site observations of harvest aligned with harvest prep plans. Trees were marked based on boundary, wildlife, and harvest trees.



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Operators knew all markings and they matched with harvest plan. Operators interviewed included Mike Limpel, owner/operator of Limpel Logging, owned/operator of forwarder on site. Sean Gilligan, "Bub," foreman/contractor for Paul Cleerman Logging, operating processor on site. Field site interviews with operators conducted, safety gear was worn at all times, safety protocols in place with appropriate safety gear on site including fire extinguishers, spill kits, shovels, first aid kits. No complaints towards CLC or TCF. Interviews with operators confirmed that Nick Snyder was out at least once per week to inspect the harvest, mark trees, and perform other necessary tasks associated with the harvest. All operators were professional and able to answer all questions. No concerns. Operators conduct pre-harvest meeting with Nick. Operators did not know their Master logger certification numbers, knew they were certified



though, and directed us to contact their administrative staff for records.





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The Conservation Fund

SFI FM Audit-MN

September 1-2, 2022

Shannon Wilks, SFI Lead Auditor

Mallore Weinheimer, SFI Team Auditor

Attendees:

Brian Schneider, TCF Operations Manager

Emilee Nelson, TCF MN Associate State Director Conservation and Acquisition

MN Conservation Lands were primarily acquired from Potlatch since 2014. No management planned on conservation lands planned except in cases of forest health issues for sites in MN. Lands are planned for transfer to state and federal agencies for perpetual conservation. Knowledge of RTE species within state have been reviewed within management plan but occurrences within parcels are not delineated due to planned long-term conservation goals. Systems are in place to review if Forest management activity is planned. Non-profit status enables TCF to avoid payment of property taxes; TCF does not utilize the rule and pays taxes for local funding of needs within states. Annual monitoring required on all land; subset monitoring conducted by field surveys. Drone monitoring observed on 9/1/2022 on TCF property not selected for audit.

- Sax-Zim Bog:(2) 80 acre Project Areas- Encompasses approximately 35,000 acres in northern MN, including 1800 acre Sax-Zim Bog Wildlife Management Area. Site hosts more than 240 species of bird species. Ditching and filling activities have impacted the hydrology of the region-opportunities for wetland restoration and generation of wetland credits. TCF acquired 9407 acres of land from Potlatch in 2014 with intent to sell land to Ecosystem Investment Partners. 23K acre wetland mitigation bank-largest in US. Historical trades of 12K acres. Remainder of lands (160 acres) will be exchanged with state. No evidence of trespass or management activity. Annual monitoring conducted three weeks ago. Observation for illegal dumping, harvesting or trespass. Infractions are documented and photographed. Requirements are for all properties every 5 years. Observation of red pine stands planted by precious landowner (Potlatch). No active Forest management planned for parcels. Planned transfer within next 2 years.





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- Boundary Waters: 24,000 acre Project Area-367 acre parcel-land will be transferred to state within Boundary Waters Land Exchange. Purchased in 2018 from Potlatch. Annual monitoring conducted by TCF. Purchased in three phases of 8k acre blocks. Parcels are scattered. Land will be exchanged for properties within Boundary Waters Wilderness Area parcels owned by State. No RTE or historical occurrences identified. No management activity planned. Stand was harvest cut by previous landowner. Observation of 70+ acre regeneration of aspen with island of retention observed. No evidence of trash or trespass on site.



- Great Northern Transmission Line: 2189 acre Project- USFWS mitigation habitat for Northern Long-Eared Bats. Deed restriction on property for prevention of development. Goal is habitat for bat species. Shaggy bark species of trees. Funded by MN Power and Light. Property enrolled MN SFIA program for state of MN. Annual requirements for compliance to FM management plan. Plans registered and approved by MN DNR and administration by MN Department of Revenue. DNR has not performed any surveys on site for NLEB population or occurrences. Land is open for recreational hunting and ATVs on designated trails. Evidence of ATV traffic observed with no water quality or soil compaction issues observed.



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- Dagg: 42 Acre Project Area-USFS Chippewa National Forest requested TCF assistance in acquisition of parcel in 2017. Priority is for USFS for undeveloped shoreline on Clubhouse Lake and My Lake. Property adjoins National Forest. Northern Hardwood (35%); sub-boreal Balsam Fir-Spruce Forest (28%) and Jack Pine-Red Pine (18%) forest composition. Rolling terrain topography. No RTE, Old Growth or historically significant features on property. Annual monitoring conducted by TCF field staff. Grant (state funds)utilized for purchase of property. Deed restriction placed on property, so federal government doesn't defer to states on restrictions. Plan to utilize federal funds for payment to state and release of restrictions for transfer to federal. No observation of management activities. Property open for recreation. Mature stems of white pines, aspens, white spruce, balsam firs and red pines. Wind damaged stems on ground. Recreational lakes with development observed on adjacent parcels. Protection for Common Loon for breeding habitat as secondary objective.





TCF SFI Audit Notes-MW

Thursday, 9/1/22

Northern Conservation Lands, MN

Attendees:

TCF: Brian Schneider, Emilee Nelson

NSF: Shannon Wilks, Mallore Weinheimer

Site 1: Sax-Zim Bog

160 acres, finished monitoring 3 weeks ago, no major infractions. Part of larger mitigation bank and land trade from Potlatch Deltic to St Louis County lands to trade low production . 9k acres have already been part of this project and this is the last 160 acres. No management activities occur except for monitoring, land is intended for conservation as part of extensive wildlife habitat to over 240 species of birds, including Great gray owl habitat. Grouse also observed on site. No noxious weed issues observed, none known to staff. A Red pine plantation was observed on site and staff anticipated that it would be managed in the future to help restore more native forest once the property is transferred back to the county, but TCF would not be involved further. This property is part of 35k acres of larger Sax-Zim bog.



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Site 2: Boundary Waters

367 acres, part of 24k acre larger transfer project. 2019 Potlatch purpose, seeking to turn back over to public shortly. Annual monitoring completed, no observed infractions, trespass, or other concerns. Approximately 75 acres was clearcut in last 10 years and is regenerating mostly as aspen, with older forest around edges of property. No management will be done on this property, this property is being held for conservation and eventual transfer for public lands. No known fire history, threatened/endangered species on site. No known pests or diseases on site.



Site 3: Great Northern Transmission Line



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Site is mitigation habitat for Northern Long-eared bats and funded by MN power company. Trees older and have shaggy bark for roosting. Management plan created by Minnesota DNR. Land is used for recreation, but no other management activity here. No problems cited by TCF staff.



Site 4: Dagg

42 acres, mixed Northern hardwood and conifer forest, high quality native forest habitat with mature pines, spruce, and mixed hardwoods. No RTE, old growth, or archeological features on property. Property adjacent to national forest and acquired to protect undeveloped shoreline on lakes for Common loon breeding habitat. Plan is to transfer land to USFS and property was purchased using grant funds. No management activities observed on site. TCF completes annual monitoring on property.

Interviews (Conducted on 8/31/2022):

Bill Gibson-Security: Removed 24,000 lbs historical household trash from property- during previous landowner. Gated and security utilized for protection. Cameras utilized for identification and reporting of violations to game wardens. Wardens issue tickets based on visual confirmation of license plates. Primarily ATV's from National Forest. Security monitoring for timber sales. Installation of cameras to count empty/loaded trucks. Local contact for stakeholders and issues.

Mike Lempel-WI MTH and FISTA; confirmed no one on job born before 2004. Minimum age of personnel on job is 40.



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Shawn Gilligan, Paul Cleerman Logging-Foreman. Confirmed pre-harvest. Meeting. Red lines for drainage on parcel. Confirmed weekly monitoring and maps.

The Conservation Fund

SFI FM Audit- **White Pine Forest, Maine**

September 14, 2022

Michelle Matteo, SFI Team Auditor

For all harvest areas: viewed site inspection form with field visits, green trees and wildlife trees retained, no issues with merchandising or other field issues viewed.



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White Pine Forest, Maine

Visited as Part of the LandVest FSC FM Group audit, also as part of the SFI 2022 FM audit

Stop 1: Rainbow Stew

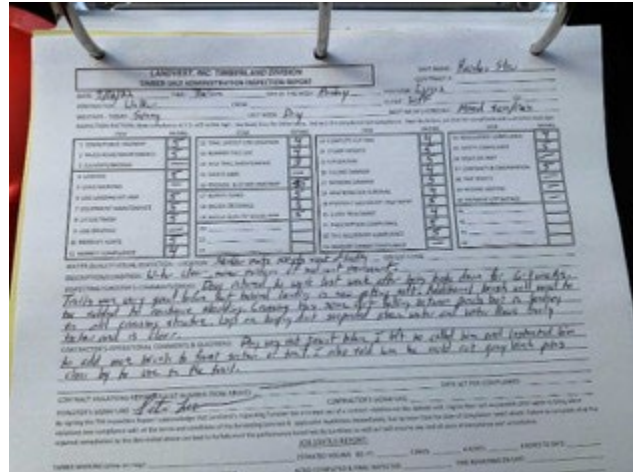
Active, about 18 acres. Remove OS white pine to get this land to go back to its natural state.

Take down to 8" pines. Leave the wildlife trees (not marked).

Viewed inspection forms, logger is doing a good job. Timber mats over the crossing, will brush the trails when wet, & clean off the landing. All pine going to Irving.

Archaeologically sensitive layer in company GIS, means that there is a potential for sites to be found. Wet runs are marked, logger added some brush into the trail, no issues.

This was one of Chadbourne Tree Farms older property, falls under the Maine Forest Service area forest ranger, Brad Bucknell. No issues viewed.



Interview with logger: Aware of the markings in the field by forester for harvest limits, provided Rx by forester. Only pine to harvest here, hand felling. For site closeout, will install water bars, forester will typically mark areas for water bars.

CLP trained last spring, still needs to complete the logging evaluation part. Chaps, First aid kit, spill kit present. Not sure of spill amount, but will communicate with forester in the event of an issue. Fire extinguisher is in the red, needs replacing. Aware of invasives, not many present. Good communication with forester Peter.





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The Conservation Fund

SFI FM Audit- **Buckeye Forest (SFI), California**

November 9, 2022

Michelle Matteo, SFI Team Auditor

Buckeye Forest (SFI), California

Stop 1: Stream improvement project for salmon

Fisheries Restoration Grant Program, run by CalF&W

Viewed a number of the instream improvements that were installed in cooperation to with Christopher Blanco, contractor, who helps write the grant and implement project. Grant project that runs a bit over a mile upstream, anchoring trees into each other and wedging them along the bank to secure them in place, creating improved salmon habitat. Extensive grant documentation viewed.





Stop 2: Redecked bridge



As part of the infrastructure repairs, on Buckeye Forest, TCF maintains it's bridges and culverts. Bridge was redecked as it was in poor condition. TCF tore off the old deck and replaced the rotting wood. After that was completed, they receive a complaint about the lack of a bumper log on one side of the bridge, it is unclear where the bumper log went, perhaps it was piled on the side of the bank.

Grasshopper Timber Harvest:

Active THP underway, 50% cut, still open but logger left for the year, due to the wet season arriving.

Hack & squirt completed in 2021 here, however none in 2022. Treated 1" up to 20" stems, retained >20" for wildlife trees.

Harvest looks good, no issues noted. Logger will move back in, after the rainy season is over in 2023 and finish the cut.

Whole tree logged, can see a lot of ground, with more slash piled and burned on the landings.

Piles will be burned next year by the forester and technicians, likely with snow cover.



Query from arch database and subsequent field visit by Sonoma State University Staff, located and archeological site underneath the ground.

Rocked the main trail to protect arch. site underneath the roadbed, information about the presence of the site was provided during the regular consultation period of the THP, per CA forestry laws. It is not known what type of site it is, but the arch crew mapped the area with red & white flagging and the road was rocked in at this road crossing. Area logged into database & provided to the State, Sonoma State University manages the database.



Spring drainage found in multiple spots crossing the road. French drain type pipe used to move the water across the trail.

Waterbars were initially installed by logger, but did not direct the water correctly, so logger had to return and re-install all the waterbars.

Multiple areas of unstable slope present; waterbars are also found on both sides of the unstable area to divert the water from the slough and slope the road, so no water is retained.



Good water bar installation, boundaries respected, buffers for class 2 streams respected.

Discussed planned firebreak, with variable retention unit on Francini Creek and a planned firebreak with no timber harvesting.

Harvest looks good and site was closed out for the winter, until harvesting can begin again in 2023



Appendix 5

Sustainability Audit Attendance Sheet

Company Name The Conservation Fund

Location Remote Opening; Field Sites in NC, WI, MN, ME & CA; Remote Closing Meeting

Type of Audit SFI Forest Management

Opening Meeting Date 16 August 2022 Closing Meeting Date 18 November 2022

Name	Position	Attended Opening Meeting?	Attended Closing Meeting?
Shannon Wilks	Lead SFI Auditor	Y	Y
Mallore Weinheimer	Team SFI Auditor	Y	Y
Michelle Matteo	Team SFI Auditor	Y	Y
Jenna Schreiber	TCF Operations Manager	Y	Y
Brant McClary (NC Field Sites)	Gelbert, Fulbright & Randolph Forestry Consultants		
Stephen Bazemore (NC Field Sites)	Gelbert, Fulbright & Randolph Forestry Consultants		
Brian Schneider	TCF Operations Manager	Y	Y
Bill Gibson (WI Field Sites)	Independent Security		
Nick Schneider (WI Field Sites)	Compass Land Consultants		
Mike Lempel (WI Field Sites)	Forwarder Operator		
Shawn Gilligan (WI Field Sites)	Paul Cleerman Logging Foreman		
Emilee Nelson (MN Field Sites)	TCF MN Associate State Director Conservation & Acquisition		
Holly Newberger	North Coast Program Manager	Y	Y
Christopher Blanco (CA Field Site)	Contractor		



Appendix 6

Forestry Program COVID-19 Report Appendix

Client Name: The Conservation Fund
FRS: C0144679

Is this a fully remote special audit? YES NO Justification: Audit is conducted on site. No remote audit.

Is a remote special audit for certificate extension needed? YES NO Justification:

Approximate date of the future on-site special surveillance or re-evaluation audit to be completed within the allowed extension period.

Was this remote audit able to be effectively completed using remote audit methods? YES NO If no, why? State reason if "no" is selected: No remote audit. Audit was conducted on site.

Are there specific portions of the audit that could not be effectively evaluated? YES NO Portion of the audit that could not be audited: No remote audit. Audit was conducted on site.

Are there follow-up items needed from the remote event? YES NO Does additional time need be added to the next audit based on these follow-up items? State follow-up items needed if "yes" is selected:

State reason for and amount of additional time: No remote audit. Audit was conducted on site.

Table with 3 columns: Remote audit methods used, Remote method/tool, Used for. Row 1: MS Teams, MS Teams, Opening/Closing Meeting



Additional questions

When is it expected that the organization will be able to function normally?

Normal operations-following all state and federal requirements.

Is the organization able to ship products or perform the service defined within the current scope of certification? If not, when is it expected to be able to do so?

Normal operations-following all state and federal requirements.

Does the organization need to use alternative manufacturing and/or distribution sites? If so, are these currently covered under the current certification, or will they need to be evaluated?

N/A

Will some of the processes and/or services performed, or products shipped be subcontracted to other organizations? If so, how will the other organizations' activities be controlled by the certified organization?

Operations are continuing with no change. No outsourcing is planned.

To what extent has operation of the management system been affected?

Operations of the management system have not been affected.

Has the certified organization conducted an impact assessment regarding COVID-19?

Impact assessment has been conducted. Normal operations-following all state and federal requirements.
