

Eastern Ontario Model Forest

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FOREST CERTIFICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

For Private Woodlot Owners, Forest Managers & Community
Forests in the Carolinian & Great Lakes St. Lawrence Forest
Region of Southern Ontario



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FOREWORD

The Eastern Ontario Model Forest along with Domtar Cornwall, the Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA), the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry and the Canadian Forest Service created a Forest Certification Working Group (CWG) in 1999 to investigate the certification of private land in the Eastern Ontario Model Forest (EOMF) area.

Since 1999 the Certification Program has grown substantially and the EOMF became a Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC® C018800) group certificate holder in 2003, facilitating forest certification for groups of private landowners, forest managers and community forests in eastern and southern Ontario through their forest management certificate. In 2021 the OWA assumed management of the EOMF Certification program and in 2022 the EOMF joined with the OWA, increasing the resources and reach of the Certification Program. In 2023 the OWA began the process of certifying to Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) standards.

This manual has been prepared to guide the Certification Program participants and its partners as it implements certification for private Landowners, their Forest Managers, and Community Forest Managers. This document can also be used to assist other groups and individuals achieve forest certification. The manual includes Policies to outline roles and responsibilities of Forest Certification Program participants and to facilitate conduct among the participants in the program.

The forest management services provided to program participants by Forest Managers will be guided by Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). By using the SOPs outlined in this manual the EOMF, Forest Managers and individual Landowners will ensure that forest management of all certified forests comply with the applicable standards. This manual will be reviewed periodically for appropriateness and revised as required. The EOMF along with its partners have developed a suite of checklists, MOU's and reporting forms and will make these tools available to those who request them.

There is some prescriptive guidance provided to Forest Managers but it is up to the individual to utilize the best available science combined with their knowledge and experience to determine the most appropriate course of action, based on scale, intensity, and risk related to operational and management decisions on their forest of responsibility.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	1
ACRONYMS	2
INTRODUCTION	3
POLICIES.....	8
Policy 1.0 –Forest Certification Program Structure Policy.....	9
Policy 1.1 – Legal Requirements Policy	14
Policy 1.2 – Financial Policy	15
Policy 1.3 – Minimum Requirements Policy	17
Policy 1.4 – Entering, Exiting and Expulsion Policy.....	21
Policy 1.5 – Consultation, Communication and Outreach Policy	23
Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy	26
Policy 2.0 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites Policy	30
Policy 2.1 – Protection of Forest Values and Pest Management Policy	33
Policy 2.2 – Major Natural Disturbance Salvage and Response Policy.....	34
Policy 3.0 – Processing, Manufacturing and Purchasing Policy	35
Policy 3.1 – Outsourcing Policy	37
Policy 3.2 – Certified Maple Syrup Production Policy	39
Policy 3.3 – Certified Forest Products Sales Policy	40
Policy 3.4 – Labeling and Text Approval Policy	42
Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy	43
Policy 4.1 – Corrective Action Request Policy.....	46
Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy.....	47
Policy 4.3 – Active Forest Management Unit Policy.....	49
Policy 4.4 – Area of Management Activities Policy	50

Policy 4.5 – Significant Negative Activities Policy	51
Policy 5.0 – Education and Training Policy	53
Policy 6.0 – Indigenous Rights Policy.....	54
Policy 7.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy	56
Policy 7.0 – Policy and Procedures Review and Renewal Policy	57
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES.....	58
SOP 1.0 – Planning Standard Operating Procedures.....	59
SOP 1.1 – The Forest Management Plan Standard Operating Procedure	60
SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescription Standard Operating Procedure	62
SOP 1.3 – Property Boundary Lines Standard Operating Procedure	65
SOP 1.4 – Tree Marking Standard Operating Procedure	67
SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure.....	69
SOP 1.6 – Protection of Species at Risk Standard Operating Procedure	71
SOP 1.7 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites Standard Operating Procedure	74
SOP 1.8 – Cultural Heritage Values Standard Operating Procedure	76
SOP 2.0 – Access Standard Operating Procedure	79
SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure.....	83
SOP 4.0 – Pests, Regeneration, Invasive Species, and Pesticides Standard Operating Procedures.....	87
SOP 4.1 – Pesticide Use Standard Operating Procedure	88
SOP 4.2 – Forest Renewal Standard Operating Procedure.....	89
SOP 4.3 – Integrated Pest Management and Forest Fire Prevention Standard Operating Procedure	90
SOP 4.4 – Invasive Exotic Species Standard Operating Procedure.....	91
SOP 5.0 – Auditing, Internal Auditing, Monitoring & Assessment Standard Operating Procedure	93
SOP 6.0 – Environmental Protection Standard Operating Procedure.....	100
SOP 7.0 – Certified Maple Syrup Production Standard Operating Procedure.....	102

Appendix A – List of Agreements, Reporting Forms & Checklists	106
Appendix B – Guidelines for Small-Scale Harvesting (Personal Use).....	107
Glossary	108

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George Cedric Metcalf Foundation	Eastern Ontario Certified Forest Owners
Ontario Woodlot Association	Mazinaw – Lanark Forest Inc.
Boises Est	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
Renfrew County CFDC	Home Depot Foundation
Richard Ivey Foundation	Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry CFO Inc.	South Nation Conservation
Ontario Stewardship	Canadian Model Forest Network
Domtar Communications Papers Inc.	Frontenac County CFDC
Valley Heartland CFDC	FSC Smallholders Fund

The EOMF would also like to thank all the members of the current and past Certification Working Group(s). For the past 24 years, dozens of individuals have contributed their time and expertise to the growth and success of the EOMF Forest Certification Program. Your support and dedication to the program is greatly appreciated.

ACRONYMS

AGS	Acceptable Growing Stock
ANSI	Area of Natural or Scientific Interest
AOC	Area of Concern
ASI	Assurance Services International
CAR	Corrective Action Request
CFM	Community Forest Manager
CFS	Canadian Forest Service
CLTIP	Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program
CoC	Chain of Custody
CSA	Canadian Standards Association
CWG	Certification Working Group
DBH	Diameter at Breast Height
DFO	Department of Fisheries & Oceans
DWD	Downed Woody Debris
EOMF	Eastern Ontario Model Forest
FM	Forest Manager
FMP	Forest Management Plan
FOIR	Forest Operations Inspection Report
FOP	Forest Operations Prescription
FRI	Forest Resource Inventory
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GIS	Geographic Information System
GLSL	Great Lakes – St. Lawrence
HCV	High Conservation Value
IRM	Integrated Resource Management
LG	Landowner Group
LGC	Landowner Group Coordinator
MFTIP	Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program
MOE	Ministry of Environment
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCC	National Capital Commission
NHIC	Natural Heritage Information Centre
NRIC	Natural Resources Information Centre
NRVIS	Natural Resources Values Information System
OBM	Ontario Base Map
WSN	Workplace Safety North
OMNRF	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry
OWA	Ontario Woodlot Association
P&P	Policies & Procedures
PSW	Provincially Significant Wetland
RPF	Registered Professional Forester
SFI	Sustainable Forestry Initiative
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SLIMF	Small Low Intensity Managed Forests
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UGS	Unacceptable Growing Stock
VTE	Vulnerable, Threatened, or Endangered
WSIB	Workplace Safety Insurance Board

INTRODUCTION

Certification includes two components: Forest Certification, which is the verification of the sustainability of forest management activities; and Product Certification, which is directed at the production and tracking of certified forest products and is also termed “chain of custody” certification.

Currently two systems of third-party forest certification are implemented in Ontario: the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification program, and the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI).

In 2000, through the research of the certification working group, it was concluded that certification could be an important means towards the end goal of achieving sustainable forestry on the ground. Preliminary analysis carried out by the EOMF indicated that the Forest Stewardship Council system was the most applicable for testing the feasibility of forest certification for owners of small woodlots within the EOMF area. Considerations included:

- FSC had developed draft regional standards, for the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Forest Region (GLSL Standards) that appear to be accepted by forestry practitioners/operators (Wildlands League 2000);
- FSC indicated a willingness to work with the EOMF in developing an interpretation of their regional standards for use on private land and in the development of a pilot project to test this interpretation; and
- Costs of forest certification by the other systems seemed to be cost prohibitive for small-scale forestry operations at the time of the project.

In 2023, changes in both FSC and SFI Certification led the Certification Working Group (CWG) to investigate adding SFI certification to the program. Considerations included:

- The development of an appropriate SFI small-holders standard;
- The willingness of SFI to work with the EOMF and OWA to support SFI certification;
- Additional value-added services provided by SFI including grants and advocacy;
- Support from existing program participants to pursue SFI Certification;
- The expression of interest from potential program members for SFI certification; and
- Changes to the administrative requirements of FSC Certification that posed potential challenges for some existing group members.

The process of Group Certification involves a legal entity (in this case the EOMF, henceforth called the *Group Manager*) organizing the certification process, holding a certificate and acting as Group Manager. The Group Manager establishes and supports groups of forest owners with small forest areas managed by Forest Managers. In addition, the Group Manager supports the certification of private commercial forests, and Community Forests. Community Forests are forests owned and managed by municipalities, conservation authorities or other community and conservation-focused entities. Generally in Ontario, Community Forests were a part of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry (OMNRF) now defunct Agreement Forest Program.

The Group Manager defines the forest management requirements for participants needed to implement the FSC Standards and monitors their performance. The Group Manager chooses the certification body, maintains records, manages the certification audit, and evaluates participants to ensure all forest properties in the certified pool meet the applicable forest management standards.

The relationships between the Group Manager and the various participants in the program are further outlined in the Memoranda of Understanding which follow the responsibilities outlined in Policy 1.0 – EOMF Forest Certification Program Structure.

EASTERN ONTARIO MODEL FOREST (EOMF)

The Eastern Ontario Model Forest is a collection of dedicated individuals and groups working together to sustain and ensure the health of the forests of eastern Ontario. The EOMF forest area covers more than 1.5 million hectares, north from Gananoque on the St. Lawrence River, through the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton into Lanark County and east to the Quebec border. It also encompasses the lands of the Mohawks of Akwesasne. The EOMF forest area is a part of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Forest Region with a variety of commercial and non-commercial tree species. The EOMF area is approximately 88% privately owned and has over one million residents. For more information visit www.eomf.on.ca.

ONTARIO WOODLOT ASSOCIATION (OWA)

The Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA) is a not-for-profit grassroots organization governed by an elected executive committee, and a volunteer board of directors. The OWA is comprised of a strong network of approximately two dozen regional chapters. Our members own and manage woodlots throughout the province and include individuals and organizations that support our goals. The OWA believes that private landowners have a key role to play to ensure that sustainably managed forests remain a part of Ontario's future. Collectively, we can continue to ensure the healthy future of our private forest resource.

CERTIFICATION BODY (Auditor)

The Group Manager selects a consultant to act as the third party auditor. The auditor is accredited by Assurance Services International (ASI) and has the authority to certify forests to both the relevant FSC and SFI standards.

FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL® (FSC®).

The Forest Stewardship Council is an international non-profit organization founded to support environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests. It supports the development of national and regional standards to be used to evaluate whether a forest is being well-managed. All forest products carrying the FSC logo are independently certified as originating from forests that meet the internationally recognized FSC's 10 guiding Principles

FSC, with its head office in the city of Bonn, Germany, is governed by an elected Board which consists of people from industry, environmental, social and labour groups, Indigenous People's representatives, and others. FSC Canada is based out of Toronto. For more information, visit www.fsccanada.org.

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE (SFI)

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative is an independent, non-profit organization that collaborates with a diverse network to help address local and global forest sustainability challenges. SFI works with the forest sector, brand owners, conservation groups, resource professionals, landowners, educators, local communities, Indigenous Peoples, governments, and universities to advance:

- Sustainable forestry and responsible purchasing globally through certification standards and certified products;
- Credible and effective solutions to environmental challenges through the SFI standards and leadership initiatives;
- Collaborations between local communities and the SFI network to increase mutual understanding of the values and benefits provided by sustainably managed forests; and

- Environmental literacy, stewardship, and career pathways using trees and forests as windows on the world.

CERTIFICATION WORKING GROUP (CWG)

The EOMF created the Certification Working Group (CWG) to investigate, manage and guide the Forest Certification Program. Membership in the CWG includes EOMF staff and Board members, representatives for private landowner groups, forest industry, Community Forests, forest managers, and maple syrup producers. The CWG is supported by a variety of other resource people (e.g., First Nations, EOMF Science Committee, government agencies, etc.). Currently there are two CWGs – one in eastern Ontario and one located in southwestern Ontario.

FOREST MANAGER (FM)

The title of forest manager throughout this manual refers to the forestry practitioner responsible for undertaking and overseeing all stages of forest operations to ensure that the quality of the forestry operations meets the requirements in the Standard Operating Procedures. There may be many different Forest Managers across the certification program area. All must have demonstrated having the minimum requirements as set out in Policy 1.3 – Minimum Requirements Policy and must be approved by the Group Manager.

Forest Managers can be hired by the Group Manager, by individual landowners, by landowner groups, or by community forest owners. A forest manager may be hired to undertake only one aspect of forest operations, many different operations, or all operations. The forest manager may work for a Landowner Group, for individual landowners, or for community forest owners.

INDIVIDUAL LANDOWNER

This designation refers to individual landowners participating in the Certification Program. They could be:

- Individual landowners that are not part of any group;
- Members of a Landowner Group (see below);

“Individual Landowner” is used interchangeably with “woodlot owner”.

LANDOWNER GROUP

This designation refers to a group of landowners, who together have their woodlots certified. They may have their own board of directors. The Group Manager holds the Group Certificate on behalf of the members of a given Landowner Group.

Participants manage their forests within the policies & procedures outlined in this manual and are committed to the meeting the standard(s) to which they are certified.

LANDOWNER GROUP ADMINISTRATOR/COORDINATOR

Each Landowner Group will have a group coordinator or administrator. The administrator will have a MoU with the Group Manager. The Group Manager has MoU's with each member of the group and works directly with the members to ensure sustainable forest management across the landscape. The Landowner Group Administrator could be a member of the CWG.

COMMUNITY FOREST OWNER

This designation refers to the owner of a given Community Forest participating in the Forest Certification Program. Community Forests are forests owned and managed by municipalities, conservation authorities and/or other conservation entities. Generally, in Ontario, Community Forests were a part of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry's (OMNRF) now defunct Agreement Forest Program. They also include forests that meet the FSC definition of community forests that are managed by the community for the benefit of the community.

PRIVATE COMMERCIAL FOREST

A private commercial forest is defined as forest primarily managed for financial investment such as fiber production, carbon credits, or land speculation and is held by a commercial entity who has achieved Certification through the Group Certificate.

FOREST INDUSTRY

The term "Forest Industry" refers to all manufacturers who use wood from program certified woodlands, including but not limited to sawmills, veneer mills, pulp and paper mills, composite board plants, chip plants and firewood dealers. The Forest Industry participates in the Forest Certification Program by having representation on the CWG.

GROUP MEMBERS

Group members refers to those landowners who properties have achieved certification through the Certification Program. The term "forest owner" is used interchangeably with group member.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Program participants refers to all members within the certification program including certified forest owners, community forests, commercial forests, forest managers, and the Group Manager.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR LANDOWNERS, FOREST MANAGERS, AND GROUP MANAGER

This manual provides the "rules of the road" that are to be followed to ensure the maintenance of the applicable forest management standard. Before joining the Forest Certification Program, group members must be committed to the sustainable management of their forests in accordance with the Policies and Standard Operating Procedures set herein for all forest operations. Additionally, group members, by joining the program, commit to achieving the applicable forest management standard(s) to which they are certified.

Group Members' short-term and long-term objectives for their woodlots are taken into consideration during the preparation of the forest management plan for their woodlot. They are encouraged to become personally involved in the development of the forest management plan, as well as its implementation, where they are qualified. Woodlot owners interested in acquiring wood from their woodlots for personal use are referred to Appendix B – Guidelines for Small-Scale Harvesting (Personal Use) which provides guidelines for such use.

A voice for landowners during decision-making processes is provided by Landowner Groups (where applicable) and through optional and voluntary participation in the Certification Working Group, which is the decision-making body for the Forest Certification Program as described in Policy 1.0 – EOMF Forest Certification Program Structure.

Supporting reporting forms and checklists are referenced to in the Appendices. All supporting documentation such as guidelines, manuals, files, records, etc., will be maintained by the Group Manager.

FOREST MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

The forest management certification standards are the group of standards and policies published by FSC and SFI that certified forest owners and all program participants must meet, as applicable. Henceforth the term *standards* will be used to refer to the entirety of the documents from both FSC and SFI. The term *applicable standards* is used to denote when a condition or circumstance is applicable to either FSC, SFI or both standards, depending on what certifications the program participant is certified to. The forest owner only needs to meet the standards, FSC or SFI, to which they are certified. This manual will differentiate requirements between the two standards when needed.

POLICIES

Policy 1.0 –Forest Certification Program Structure Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revision dates: December 2003, March 2007, August 2012, December 2014, October 2022, July 2033

Number of pages: 5

Complementary Policies

- All policies

Purpose

The purpose of the Forest Certification Program Structure Policy is to outline the roles and responsibilities of the Group Manager and of all individuals and/or groups participating in the Forest Certification Program.

Policy

Refer to Tables 1 and 2 for a simplified outline of the various roles played by program participants.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Group Manager

- To allow the CWG (Certification Working Group) to set the direction for the forest certification program and be the main decision-making body;
- To commit on behalf of all program participants that all program participants will adhere to the applicable certification standards and uphold the principles of sustainable forest management for the long-term, continuously improve the group, management system, and continuously, support the improvement of sustainable forest management by members of the group;
- To develop Policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as required to meet applicable standards;
- To employ competent staff and/or contractors with the required skills and knowledge to manage the group;
- Represent the group in the certification process and be the main point of contact for matters for group management administration and certification;
- To approve interested landowners, community forests, and forest managers for participation in the program based on Policy 1.4 – Entering, Exiting and Expulsion Policy
- To expel landowners from the program based on Policy 1.4 – Entering, Exiting and Expulsion Policy
- To develop, sign and have on file Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) or Agreements with:
 - Certification Body (Agreement);
 - Forest Owners (MoU) under a Landowner Group Administrator;
 - Private Forest Owners;
 - Forest Managers (MoU), when needed;
 - Community Forest Managers (MoU);
 - Other partners and/or contractors as required; and
 - Develop new MoU and/or Agreement templates as required.
- To monitor program participants to ensure compliance with policies and standards;
- To maintain an up-to-date Forest Certification Program Organizational Chart and Master Contact List and for those items to be made available, upon request, to all participants in the program;

- To strive towards financial responsibilities as defined within this manual and to achieve financial self-sufficiency.
- To provide group members with tools to assess potential harvest quantity, species and grades in order to provide an indication of prospective forest products marketing opportunities.
- Assist Group Members and program partners in participating in the certified forest product value chain;
- To responsibly manage the certificates and to manage Non-Conformances (NCR) as issued by the third party certifier;
- To maintain records for members of the Group Certificate. The records will contain:
 - Signed MoU between EOMF and landowner and/or forest manager, as appropriate
 - Any MoU or agreements between the landowner and forest workers
 - Updated and historical forest management plans including property maps
 - Up-to-date contact list (name, phone number and email address) for all members
 - Relevant correspondence with landowners
 - Any other pertinent documentation
- To collect annual certification fees from Group Members;
- For FSC Certified forests: To collect High Conservation Value (HCV) reports from the program participants (not applicable to SLIMF forest owners);
- To support Group Members in accessing information about natural and cultural heritage information;
- To implement a tracing system for forest products from origin and ensuring the tracking of product volumes;
- To incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, as well as respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances (i.e., Adaptive Management approach is used);;
- To encourage educational opportunities for forest owners and continuous improvement of the group management system;
- Maintain records of Forest Owner participation;
- To provide advice and guidance to participants of the Forest Certification Program; and
- To provide forestry workers with referenced material in this document where they are not readily available (e.g., Natural Resources Information Centre / OMNRF).

Forest Manager Roles and Responsibilities

- Manager approved by the Group Manager;
- Has signed MoU with the Group Manager;
- Ensures compliance with this manual;
- Ensures the use of the bill of lading system for wood movement;
- Implements forest management in accordance with applicable standards; and
- Monitors forest operations.

Landowner Roles and Responsibilities

- Membership approved by the Group Manager;
- Has signed MoU with the Group Manager;
- Maintains title to property;
- Ensures property boundaries are defined in agreement with neighbours;
- Follows this manual and commits to conforming to the applicable standards and management systems developed by the Group Manager;
- Monitors forest operations on their own property or ensures monitoring by Forest Manager;
- Ensures the use of the bill of lading system for wood movement; and
- Pays for certain forest operations and annual membership fee to support certification.
- Provides the EOMF with update on activities when requested by EOMF

Landowner Group Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

- Ensures compliance of the Landowner Group with this manual;
- Maintains files for all group members which will include:
 - Any MoU or agreements between the landowner and forest workers
 - Updated and historical forest management plans including property maps
 - Pre-harvest inspection audits
 - Post-harvest inspection audits
 - Any correspondence with landowners
 - Any other pertinent documentation
- Monitors forest operations;
- Ensures the use of the product tracking system;
- Provide the Group Manager with current contact lists for program participants;
- Endeavors to increase number of properties in their group;
- Ensures payment of annual certification fees to the Group Manager; and
- Provides the Group Manager with an annual progress report outlining; membership, harvest levels and any other pertinent information.

Community Forest Manager and Commercial Forest Manager Roles and Responsibilities

- Carries out the roles and responsibilities of a Forest Manager;
- Has a signed MoU with the Group Manager;
- Follows this manual and commits to conforming to the applicable standards;
- Monitors forest operations, including formalizing and implementing a process for conducting and recording potential impacts of harvest operations;
- Ensures the use of the product tracking system;
- Provides the Group Manager with current Contact and documentation as required in this manual or as requested by the Group Manager;
- Pays annual certification fees to the Group Manager; and
- Provides the Group Manager with an annual progress report.

Item	EOMF	Forest Manager (FM)	Landowner	Landowner Group Coordinator (LGC)	Community Forest (CF)	Commercial Forest
MoU / Agreement	Develops and signs MoU with FM, Landowner, LGs, Community Forest, & Commercial FM	Signs MoU with EOMF	Signs MoU with EOMF	Signs MoU with EOMF	Signs MoU with EOMF	Signs MoU with EOMF
Policies	Develops and ensures they are followed Provides advice and guidance	Follows	Follows	Follows	Follows	Follows
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)	Develops and ensures they are followed Provides advice and guidance	Follows	Follows	Follows	Follows	Follows
Financial	Seeks financial independence for program Receives fees and certification fees from participating members & groups	N/A	Pays for forest management operations and related procedures Pays the EOMF an annual certification fee and a percentage of standing timber sale	Pays the EOMF an annual certification fee on behalf of their group.	Pays for all forest management operations and related procedures Pays the EOMF an annual certification fee	Pays for all forest management operations and related procedures Pays the EOMF an annual certification fee
Internal Audit / Monitoring	Internal audit of program participants Summary of internal audits and monitoring	Monitors operations and reports results to EOMF when requested	Monitors operations and reports results to EOMF when requested	N/A	Monitors operations and reports results to EOMF when requested	Monitors operations and reports results to EOMF when requested
Communication / Education	Provides central point of communication between Accredited Certifier and program participants Promotes Forest Certification Program	Promotes Forest Certification Program	Promotes Forest Certification Program	Promotes Forest Certification Program	Promotes Forest Certification Program	Promotes Forest Certification Program

Table 2. Key Roles and Responsibilities of Landowners & Landowner Group Coordinators

Activity	Landowner Role/LG Coordinator	Group Manager	Forest Manager Role**	Logger Role **	Documentation On File	Cost
FSC/SFI Certificate Issued	Comply with EOMF Policy and Procedures	Group Manager holds FSC Certificate	Comply with EOMF Policy and Procedures	Comply with EOMF Policy and Procedures	Certification	GM / LO*
MoU with Landowner/ Forest Owner	Sign and agree on conditions	Provide template. Sign and agree on conditions	Sign and agree on conditions	N/A	Signed MoU	LO
Forest Management Plan	Develop plan , provide vision, direction, objectives and initial stand analysis	Develop standards to be followed and accept management plan	Prepare management plan	N/A	Approved forest management plan	LO
Forest Operation Prescription	Provide input, prepare if qualified, accept	N/A	Prepare with detailed inventory / stand analysis. Sign, implement FOP	Follow	FOP signed by RPF, pre-harvest inventory and map	LO
Tree Marking	Mark trees if qualified, provide input, accept and approve	N/A	Implement tree marking	Follow	FOP signed by RPF, pre-harvest inventory and map	LO
Forest Values Stick Nests, Buffers etc.	Identify and notify FM	N/A	Identify and implement guidelines	Identify and notify LO or FM	Values identified on a property map	LO
Forest Tender Process	Accept tenders	Provide contacts, suggest format, tender package template	Assemble tender package and facilitate viewing	View tendered forest	Tender package and signed bid submission	LO
Logger Selection	Decide based on tenders, experience	Provide guidance	Provide guidance	Past references, qualifications	Minimum required documentation	None
Sale of Standing Timber	Detail and sign	Provide template	Provide input	Detail, sign and follow	Signed sale of standing timber	None
Harvest Inspection	Monitor loggers (optional)	Develop monitoring requirements and protocols	Conduct on behalf of landowner	Compliance	Completed harvest inspection reports	LO
Forest Resource Inventory	Provide initial input into forest management planning	N/A	Pre and post-harvest inventory	N/A	Updated forest management plan	LO

* Annual membership fees are paid by FO or LGC. EOMF collects this annual fees .

** The FM and/or logger could be the landowner provided the minimum requirements are met.

Policy 1.1 – Legal Requirements Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, March 2007, December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 1

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.0 – Forest Certification Program Structure
- Policy 1.3 – Minimum Requirements Policy
- Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy
- Policy 5.0 – Education and Training Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Legal Requirements Policy is to ensure that all participants of the EOMF Forest Certification Program are kept aware of existing and new legislation relating to forest management.

Policy

It is the responsibility of the Group Manager, through the Certification Working Group to ensure that all program participants are made aware of relevant laws and administrative requirements.

All program participants will adhere to all applicable laws.

The Group Manager will:

- Maintain a close relationship with SFI, FSC, Canadian Forest Service, Provincial forestry and science and information staff to keep abreast of any new legislation pertaining to the program;
- Maintain a library of relevant documents; and
- Ensure that all program participants are familiar with the relevant laws and requirements as determined by the Group Manager.

Policy 1.2 – Financial Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, March 2007, August 2012, October 2022, July 2023

Number of Pages: 2

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.0 – Forest Certification Program Structure
- Policy 3.0 – Processing, Manufacturing and Purchasing Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the financial policy is to outline the role of the Group Manager in the pursuit of funding to ensure that the Forest Certification Program is able to maintain and/or expand its current extent through the adoption of sustainable forest management by additional landowners and community-based forests throughout Ontario.

Background

During the pilot phase of the Forest Certification Program, the main funding source for the program was through a contribution from The Richard Ivey Foundation. Other key supporters and partners in the pilot phase of the program were the Eastern Ontario Model Forest, Domtar Inc., the Ontario Woodlot Association, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry and the Forest Stewardship Council, all through in-kind contributions.

In order to continue the program, the Eastern Ontario Model Forest pursued additional avenues of long-term funding. Funding is not only sought to keep the program going but also to ensure that the EOMF can transfer the knowledge and tools relating to certification to other groups and individuals throughout Ontario and beyond.

Annual fees are paid by all participants of the program. These fees are put towards payment for annual audits and covering expenses related to operating the program. A portion of collected payments are set aside as a “reserve” to help cover the cost of the 5-year re-assessment. Program participants are expected to cover their own forest management costs such as the preparation of a management plan, stand analysis, tree marking, forest operations monitoring, etc. Annual fees are agreed to upon signing the MoU with the Group Manager and are reviewed and updated annually by the Group Manager and the CWG.

Financial Objectives & Strategies:

Achieve financial self-sufficiency for the program over time through balanced equity representation, fundamental to this are:

- Cost sharing between the program participants, forest industry and society (foundations and government);
- Full cost recovery over time for certified forests and for the Forest Certification Program;
- Maintain a fair and agreed upon costing structure for the annual certification fees of program participants;
- Promote wood harvested from certified properties;
- Ensure that certified wood makes it to market as certified with the FSC/SFI label;
- Encourage certified product value chains; and
- Acquire favored rates for wood harvest from forests participating in the program.

Policy

Program Fees

The Program Fee is a fixed annual fee. It will be paid directly to the Group Manager and it will be used to cover the costs of program management and the annual audit. A portion will be set aside in a "Certificate Renewal" account to be used to cover the costs associated with the 5-year reassessment.

The program fee is determined based on the costing structure category that the participant falls into. They include:

A Private Forest Owner (Group) or Forest Manager (Group) is defined as a group of individual forest owners that want to achieve certification for their defined, managed forests. Private Forest Owner Groups are organized and administered by group members. Independent forest managers are hired to provide forestry services to group members. A Forest Manager (Group) is a collection of private lands administered and managed by one forest manager.

A Community Forest is defined as a forest owned by a municipality or municipally-funded organization. Generally, they are the forests that made up of former OMNRF Agreement Forests, Conservation Authority Forests or Municipal Forests. Also included in this category are forests, generally >500 ha, that meet the FSC definition of a community forest, where the forest is managed by the public for the benefit of the public. Examples include land trusts, educational Institutions, and government agencies.

Private Commercial Forest Owner is defined as an owner of properties primarily managed for financial investment such as fibre production, carbon credits, or land speculation and are held by a commercial entity .

Certified Maple Producer is a member of the Forest Certification Program and applies the FSC 100% label to their maple products. Their operation is measured in the number of taps. In addition to the standard MoU Certified Maple Producers sign an additional MoU that ensures they follow the Standards set for FSC Certified Maple Producers.

Private Forest (Woodlot) Owner is defined as a forest area owned by private individuals and managed for a mix of values. This annual contribution cost for this category will be established by the Certification Working Group.

Costing Matrix

The costing matrix outlines the current program fees by costing structure category. The costing matrix is confidential however; it is available to interested program participants by contacting Forest Certification Staff.

When a private Forest Owner, Forest Manager, Community Forest, or Commercial Forest Owner an interest in joining the Forest Certification Program presents themselves to the Group Manager, information is needed in order to determine the costs associated with joining the program. Some of this information includes:

- Contact information for those seeking FSC certification;
- The total forested area;
- The revenue generated from timber sales (Forest Manager);
- The annual harvested area;
- The annual harvested volume; and
- Location of the property.

Policy 1.3 – Minimum Requirements Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, March 2007, August 2012, December 2014, October 2022

Number of pages: 4

Complementary Policies:

- Policy 1.0 – EOMF Forest Certification Program Structure Policy
- Policy 1.1 – Legal Requirements Policy
- Policy 1.2 – Financial Policy
- Policy 1.4 – Entering, Exiting and Expulsion Policy
- Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that those involved in the Forest Certification Program are aware of the minimum requirements for forest managers, landowners, landowner groups, landowner group coordinators, community forest managers and contractors for various forest operations such as tree marking, logging, management planning, monitoring, etc.

Policy

All Participants

- Commit to complying with the applicable forest management standards and other applicable certification standards and this Policy and Procedures Manual
- Willingness to take additional training or learning to familiarize themselves with the applicable standards or to learn about practices that would contribute to compliance with the applicable standards
- Willingness to share information about certification and sustainable forest management with other stakeholders or potential clientele
- Agree to allow the Group Manager, the certification body, FSC, SFI, and ASI to fulfill their responsibilities with regard to certification, including but not limited to providing co-operation and assistance in effective responding to all requests.
- May not accept bribes
- Adhere to all applicable laws as well as all treaties and conventions to which Canada is a signatory
- Uphold the Canadian Human Rights Act, specifically eliminating: “discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered”; and
- Be willing to follow and implement the EOMF Forest Certification Program Policies and Procedures Manual.

Landowner Requirements

- Landowner properties must be approved by the Group Manager;
- Landowners must sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Group Manager;

- Landowners must be willing to share in the costs of implementation of forest certification as determined by the EOMF (refer to Policy 1.2 – Financial Policy);
- Landowners entering onto their own woodlots or onto another member's woodlot during harvest operations should take the necessary safety precautions, i.e.: hard hat, CSA approved footwear, etc.;
- Landowners operating on their own property must meet the minimum requirements for that particular activity as outlined in this manual (i.e. tree marking);
- Management units they are bringing into the group must not already be included in another FSC or SFI certificate leading to duplicate certification of the same standard;
- Disclose to the Group Manager any previous participation in forest certifications including group certification memberships or outstanding non-conformances.

Landowner Group Coordinator (LGC) Requirements

- Must sign a MoU with the EOMF outlining their relevant roles and responsibilities;

Forest Manager (FM) Requirements

- Forest Managers may be assigned to do various tasks. Some Forest Managers would be hired to do very specific tasks, such as tree marking, whereas others could be hired for many tasks, such as overseeing managed forest plan implementation or all tasks associated with implementing a harvest.
- Bachelor degree or related technical diploma in forest management or a combination of education and experience and must be a Full or Associate Member of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association;
- Familiarity with applicable laws and regulations in Ontario;
- Familiarity with Ontario provincial silvicultural guidelines applicable in the region;
- Be familiar with Occupational Health & Safety Act and have a willingness to include health and safety considerations in all activities;
- Will ensure that all forest workers on the ground have been made aware of all provincial occupational health and safety requirements;
- Demonstrated satisfactory record of compliance with agencies responsible for enforcement of forestry practices on certified property area.
- Must sign a MoU with the Group Manager, or a contract with the Landowner Group or Landowner for which they will be providing services, outlining all the relevant roles and responsibilities;
- Will carry General Liability Insurance with a minimum coverage of \$1,000,000;
- Will carry the required Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage;
- Demonstrated experience in implementing and monitoring forest operations; and
- Willingness to receive training regarding assessments for logging damage, utilization, road construction and water crossings, etc.

Forest Management Plan Author Requirements

- A Managed Forest Plan Approver (MFPA) for those properties entered into the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP) or a Full or Associate member of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association. For Woodlots that meet all requirements of MFTIP, except for the Canadian citizenship or landowner type rules, may have their plan authored by an MFPA provided the plan meets MFTIP plan standards
- A landowner may prepare a managed forest plan for their own property however, it must be approved by either the Group Manager or one of the qualified individuals mentioned above.

Forest Operations Prescription (FOP) Writer Requirements

- The FOP must be certified by a Full or Associate member of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association operating within their scope of practice or working under an exception to Ontario's Professional Foresters Act.

Tree Marker Requirements

- Must be certified Ontario Tree Marker or work under the direct supervision of certified Ontario Tree Markers.
- Tree marking auditors should be a Certified Level II Ontario Tree Marker and/or an experienced Level I Ontario Tree Marker recognized by the Group Manager;
- A Landowner who is not a certified Ontario Tree Marker may mark trees on their own property for personal use if they have taken a tree marking workshop or is accompanied by a certified Ontario Tree Marker;
- Must be aware of and follow all provincial occupational health and safety requirements; and
- Report any deviations from the FOP to the author and the landowner (e.g. new values, conditions do not match those described in FOP, etc.).

Professional Logger and/or Forest Operator Requirements

- Will carry the required Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage;
- Will have a minimum of \$1,000,000 public liability and employer's liability insurance;
- Operators and supervisors will comply with the Ontario Ministry of Labour requirements for forest operator certification (e.g. cutter/skidder, mechanized equipment operator, etc.);
- Demonstrated satisfactory record of compliance with agencies responsible for enforcement of forestry practices on certified property area;
- Will participate in accredited professional logging and/or forest operator courses, if available;
- Will participate in accredited professional skidder operator courses, if available;
- Willingness to receive S102 Industrial Training Course for Basic Forest Fire Suppression if available; and
- Will be aware of and follow all provincial occupational health and safety requirements.

Pesticide Applicator and/or Operator Requirements

- Must be licensed by the Ontario Government;
- Must carry the required insurance for pesticide application;
- Landowners may apply pesticides on their own properties ONLY IN ACCORDANCE with the Tending and Protection Standard Operating Procedures SOP 4.4 – Invasive Exotic Species Standard Operating Procedure and **Error! Reference source not found.**; and
- Will be aware of and follow all provincial occupational health and safety requirements.

Community Forest Manager Requirements

- Must be approved by the Group Manager;
- Must hold all minimum requirements listed above under Forest Manager, Forest Management Plan Author, Forest Operations Prescription Writer and Tree Marker or, hire the services of a qualified consultant to perform these tasks who meet these minimum requirements;
- Must follow the EOMF Forest Certification Program Policies & Procedures Manual;
- Prior to inclusion in the Forest Certification Group, the community forest must complete a gap analysis to determine current conformance and shortfalls with respect to the applicable Standards;
- Must be familiar with Occupational Health & Safety Act and have a willingness to include health and safety considerations in all activities; and
- Must ensure that all forest workers are aware of all relevant provincial occupational health and safety standards.

Forest Management Unit Requirements

- A Forest Management Unit (FMU) is an area of land where the owner has legal title or tenure to the land and that area of land has been certified.
- An FMU is generally, but not always, predominantly forest, and may also contain large natural areas that are non-forested, including areas incapable of sustaining trees, such as wetlands or rock outcrops, or areas capable of supporting trees but current do not because of past practices, such as agriculture.
- All forest management units must be capable of performing natural ecosystem processes either naturally or through management intervention
- Plantations that meet certification Standards and/or are being transitioned to natural forest conditions are acceptable
- Any natural areas being rehabilitated are acceptable provided the current owner or manager was not responsible for the damage needing rehabilitation, with consideration to how far in the past the damage was done
- All forest management units must be capable of meeting the requirements of this Policy and Procedures manual and all applicable Standards.
- The following non-treed, non-natural areas that will be maintained in this state for the foreseeable future may be including within the certified area:
 - Forest access roads and trails
 - Landings
 - Modest parking areas used for recreational, maintenance, or other forest management purposes
 - Small recreational or maintenance structures such as warming huts, gazebos, small storage sheds, and covered bridges
 - Other similar areas that directly contribute to forest management objectives
- The following non-treed and/or non-natural areas that will be maintained in this state for the foreseeable future may not be including within the certified area:
 - Maintenance/garage, office, administrative, or residential buildings
 - Barns and other agricultural structures
 - Large, generally paved parking lots
 - Orchards and Christmas tree farms
 - Other similar areas
- There is no minimum size or land type of FMU that may be entered into the Certification Program as long as the FMU meets the above requirements

Policy 1.4 – Entering, Exiting and Expulsion Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, March 2007, August 2012, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages:2

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.0 – EOMF Forest Certification Program Structure
- Policy 1.3 – Minimum Requirements Policy
- Policy 4.1 – Corrective Action Request policy
- Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Entering, Exiting and Expulsion Policy is to ensure that the requirements and circumstances for joining the Eastern Ontario Model Forest (EOMF) Forest Certification Program, leaving the Forest Certification Program, or being expelled from the EOMF Forest Certification Program are well understood.

Policy

Entering the Forest Certification Program

The Forest Certification Program continues to grow with the addition of new Landowners, Landowner Groups, Community Forests and Forest Managers. To facilitate this process there are key steps aimed at ensuring that these individuals or entities will meet certification standards and the requirements of the Forest Certification Program. Upon receiving an inquiry by a Landowner, Landowner Group, Community Forest or Forest Manager demonstrating a desire to join the program, all parties have a role to play in screening the applicant:

- The Group Manager must provide information to the Landowner, Landowner Group or Community Forest, to ensure that the entity can make an informed decision about joining the EOMF Forest Certification Program;
- For interested Community Forests or Landowners, the Group Manager or the FM will visit the forest of interest for a Pre-Inspection Visit. This will help determine the potential to meet program requirements. If the forest and landowner do not meet the requirements, they will be required to make the necessary changes before being allowed to join the program;
- The Landowner must have a clear understanding of the program and must sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the EOMF or with the Landowner Group Coordinator;
- The LGC will keep an up-to-date landowner list and provide an updated list to Group Manager annually prior to audits; and
- Prior to entering the Forest Certification Program, the Community Forest Owner and/or Forest Manager must undergo a gap analysis indicating conformance or shortfalls with all applicable standards. Further, the Community Forest Owner and/or Forest Manager must have a clear understanding of the program and sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the EOMF. The Community Forest Manager will keep an up-to-date list of the community forests they are managing and provide it annually to the Group Manager.

Exiting the Forest Certification Program

There may be reasons a program participant will need to voluntarily leave the program. Reasons for leaving group may include the sale of the certified property, compulsory purchase of the forest, or other personal reasons. The responsibilities of the participant include:

- Exiting member will be required to formally notify the Group or the Landowner Group Coordinator 30 days in advance of the planned leaving date; and
- Exiting member acknowledges that his forest certification status is then forfeited.

Expulsion from the Forest Certification Program

- Maintaining a FSC and SFI Certificate depends on all of the members meeting the applicable Standards and the program requirements. If one member does not meet the applicable standards and policies and is not willing to take action in meeting them, this could jeopardize the Certificate for all members. In these cases it will be necessary for that member to be expelled from the Forest Certification Program;
- If a Forest Manager or Community Forest Manager or Landowner Group Coordinator violates their Memorandum of Understanding with the EOMF or does not follow the Certification policies, they may be expelled from the program;
- A member of the program may be expelled for non-payment of annual certification fees.
- A member of a LG may be expelled for non-payment of group membership fees; and
- Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy will be followed, however, the certification body has the ultimate say with regards conformance.
- SFI certified forest owners who are expelled from the program cannot re-apply for group membership within 12 months of their expulsion.

Policy 1.5 – Consultation, Communication and Outreach Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: March 2007, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 3

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.0 – EOMF Forest Certification Program Structure
- Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy.
- Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Consultation, Communication and Outreach Policy is to establish a respectful process of facilitating communication for those involved in the Forest Certification Program and for stakeholders and affected parties that may be impacted by the program.

Consultation with stakeholders and affected parties is a certification requirement. All participants in the Forest Certification Program will need to demonstrate that stakeholders and affected parties (may include local First Nations, traditional users of the property, etc.) have been consulted with in connection with the Certification Program.

The mandate of the Forest Certification Program is to promote and demonstrate the feasibility of certification for small woodlots and community forests. To this end the Certification Program has incorporated a strong landowner and stakeholder education and outreach component. The responsibility of the Group Manager is to balance the sharing of information and experiences regarding the landowners, groups and businesses involved in the Certification Program while ensuring there is confidentiality of information where required.

Policy

1. Individuals/Groups Involved in Certification Program

- **Consultation/communication with participants:** The Group Manager will be the key contact for communication with Program Participants. The LGCs will be the key contact for communication with landowners within their landowner groups. FMs will also be in regular contact with the landowners whom they are working with.
- **Conflicting management objectives and/or practices:** In cases of non-compliance of management objectives and/or practices the FM, EOMF or LGC would inform the participant with rationale of infringement. If participant continues with non-compliance FM, EOMF or LGC would work through Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy.
- **Outreach using participants' forests and case studies:** There will be times when the Group Manager will want to use the participants' forests and information as a case example with opportunity for site visit by external parties. The Group Manager will obtain permission of the participant each time an outreach program involves non-public information and the participant's forest. (See Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy).

- **Group Manager consultation with LGC:** The Group Manager will communicate directly with the LGC regarding each Landowner Group. Both parties will determine the frequency and methods of communication.
- **Group Manager communication with Forest Manager:** The Group Manager may engage a Forest Manager for specific tasks and/or time periods on a contractual basis. Both parties will determine the frequency and methods of communication.
- **Group Manager communication with Community Forest Manager:** The Group Manager will maintain open lines of communication with Community Forest Managers by:
 - Annual forest operation assessments;
 - The Community Forest Manager preparing an annual report on the status of activities under its management;
 - The Group Manager following its audit schedule and communicating results to the Community Forest Manager; and
 - The Community Forest Manager reporting any instances of non-compliance to the Group Manager
- **Forest Manager Communication with Individual Forest Owner Members:** The FM has a working contract with individual landowners. Both parties should determine the frequency and method of communication.
- **Forest Manager communication with Landowner Group:** The Forest Manager may be contracted to complete management objectives by a Landowner Group. Both parties will negotiate this agreement.
- **Group Manager communication with Forest Industry:** The Group Manager will maintain open lines of communication with the forest industry.

2. Stakeholders and affected parties impacted by the Certification Program

- **Consultation with Affected Stakeholders and Parties:** This may include traditional users of participating forest (e.g. bird watchers, hikers, hunter's etc.). The method of notification/consultation (e.g. signage) will vary and can be determined by the forest owner or Group Manager and if needed the FM.
- **Consultation with Indigenous Peoples:** Communications and consultations with Indigenous Peoples, including Métis, are fundamental to the operation of the EOMF and OWA; the EOMF and OWA will continue this relationship through consultations with respect to the Forest Certification Program and the identification of native cultural heritage values within the region.

3. Internal to the Forest Certification Program

There is a responsibility by the Group Manager on behalf of the members of the EOMF Board of Directors, the Certification Working Group, the program participants as well as FSC and SFI to endeavor to keep the lines of communication open amongst themselves and each other.

This includes group management policies and practices, certification requirements, and an understanding of how all group members contribute to the effectiveness of meeting certification requirements. Additionally, how their contributions improve the effectiveness of the group management system the benefits of improved group performance.

This communication will take place at regular Certification Working Group meetings as well as electronic and face-to-face communication with group members.

4. Principles and Process of Consultation and Communication

Joint design / agreement of the consultation process: A consultative process will be used with stakeholders and affected parties for program decision making. This process must remain flexible and able to change throughout the process. Consultation will take place before any decisions or recommendations are made. Consulting organizations will outline their processes in writing to ensure transparency and accountability.

Agreed upon decision making: The Group Manager promotes consensus-based decision-making, each landowner group will need to decide on their system of decision making in order to ensure that consensus is reached.

Mechanisms for appropriate dispute resolution: See Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy. Appropriate time for consultation and review: Any party asked to participate in consultation or review document will be given adequate time.

Full exchange of information: Consulting organization will make available all information relevant to the resource decision.

Compensation for consultation: In unique circumstances it may be appropriate to compensate individual/group for their participation in consultation.

Appropriate means of consultation/communication for the target group: Participants should determine the most appropriate method of consultation/communication. This communication might include written, oral and/or visual means as appropriate to the community. Materials may require translation into French or technical text, tables, and charts, to diagrams or other visual aids. All communication should be in plain language that everyone can understand.

Confidentiality of individual Landowner: Group Manager will keep the membership names of Private Woodlot Owners confidential; whenever presenting information about the program, the names of members will be kept confidential. Community Forests and Commercial Forest participation in the program will be public knowledge.

Ongoing Commitment: Consultation must be ongoing. Consultation must focus on building trust and respectful working relationships.

Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, March 2007, August 2012, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 4

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.5 – Consultation, Communication and Outreach Policy
- Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy
- Policy 5.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy
- Policy 6.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Document Control and Confidentiality Policy is to establish a transparent and rigorous system for organizing, maintaining and where appropriate, sharing information about the Forest Certification Program and its participants. Further, the policy describes the methods by which information would be disseminated, how program participants would gain access to the information and issues of confidentiality.

The Certification Program has a strong education and outreach component. Therefore, balance is needed in the sharing of information and experiences regarding forest certification while ensuring the confidentiality of participant information.

Policy

Overview

Group Manager respects the privacy of its members, partners and stakeholders. The Group Manager adheres to all legislative requirements as part of its commitment to protecting privacy and will employ its best efforts to ensure that the information that is provided is safeguarded and only used for the intended purpose. The Group Manager will not sell or provide access to the private information of its membership, partners and stakeholders.

The information the Group Manager collects will allow the organization to provide better services and programs to its stakeholders. This information may be used for one or more of the following reasons:

- To help manage and sustain programs, projects and services.
- To meet the requirements of funding supporters.
- To respond to the information requests from partners.
- To seek partner feedback through surveying the needs of members, partners or stakeholders.
- To provide partners with notification of meetings, events, workshops or programs.

With respect to the Forest Certification Program, the Group Manager may share aggregate information and/or specific individual information about its members with the certification auditing agency for the purposes of maintaining the certificate.

The Group Manager will protect personal information by maintaining the appropriate technical and organizational safeguards against loss, theft, unauthorized access and disclosure. The

Group Manager will strive to keep program participants' information as accurate, complete and current as possible. Program participants may ask to see information maintained by the Group Manager to ensure that it is accurate and may amend this information as appropriate.

1. Forest Certification Program Participants

- a. Individual Landowner Members Document Control¹:** The Group Manager or the relevant Landowner Group Coordinator (LGC) will have a file for each landowner. This information is confidential, however landowners are to provide information the Group Manager or the LGC for aggregate reporting, or reporting at the landscape level. The LGC will share all of this information as needed with the Group Manager.

Maps and materials with sensitive data (e.g. endangered/threatened species, vegetation community data and economic data) are to be kept confidential. Efforts will be made to summarize the information for generalized areas.

While respecting the confidentiality of information, summaries of key elements of forest management plans may be made available to the public after consultation with the relevant certified landowners.

Aggregate summaries of information related to private landowner Certification Program Participation and activities will be made public through public annual reports. All information will be reported in aggregate and stripped of any information that could identify an individual landowner. If identifying information is to be included in annual reports, the Group Manager will obtain private landowner permission before publication.

Individual landowner member files must contain all specific information related to that individual landowner and the Forest Certification Program. This includes any correspondence specific to the landowner, any documentation related to corrective action requests, dispute resolution, forest management planning and property assessments by the Group Manager, LGC and/or Forest Manager (FM), silvicultural prescriptions, maps, etc.

- b. Landowner Group Coordinator Document Control:** The Landowner Group Coordinator will negotiate the procedure for document control with the Group Manager. The Group Manager will be the organization that ultimately shares information with outside organizations or individuals.
- c. Community Forest Document Control:** The Community Forest Manager will be responsible for maintaining documentation of relevant correspondence pertaining to the forests under their management. Examples of documentation are the same as for those individual landowners (see above). The Community Forest Manager must provide the Group Manager with access to this information for the purpose of audits, dispute resolution processes or landscape level and aggregate reporting.
- d. Forest Manager Document Control:** The Forest Manager will negotiate the document control procedure with the Group Manager. The Group Manager will be the organization that ultimately shares information with outside organizations or individuals

2. Document Control Process and Principles

Data Sharing and the “Need to Know” Principle

¹ In the case of LGA the details listed in this section will be the responsibility of the EOMF and in the case of other Landowners Groups (LG) they will be the responsibility of the LGC.

"Need-to-know" is determining when information, what information and the level of detail of information that should be disseminated to internal users or the public. The level of detail is determined by balancing the demonstrated needs of the requester or program against the needs of the Group Manager and the Forest Certification Program Participants.

The Group Manager needs to demonstrate discretion and caution when disseminating information. Information maintained by the Group Manager may include social (management plans and other property specific information) and economic data (harvesting schedules, marketing objectives) that could jeopardize a participants' right to confidentiality and/or ability to remain competitive.

3. Access to Information

Requests for access to relevant information maintained by the Group Manager or program participants will be reviewed using the following guidelines. This protocol may also be useful for developing similar protocols for other "sensitive" data and information held by the Group Manager and/or program participants.

- General Information Requests: The Group Manager or the Community Forest Managers are the first contacts for information requests. Non-public information is information and materials deemed by the Group Manager, the LGC, or the Community Forest Manager as confidential.
- Special Information Requests: Partners or other groups working on certification may request more detailed non-public information. The Group Manager will weigh the needs of the requester with the interests of the Group Manager and the relevant participants. An informal or formal agreement may be developed to control use of the information by the requester.
- Public Information using non-public participants' information: there will be times when the Group Manager will want to use participants' forests or information as case studies. This may include offering opportunities to external parties for site visits. The Group Manager will seek permission from the participant each time an outreach program involves participants' non-public information.
- Using non-public Landowner Group information will require permission from the Landowner Group's decision making body (e.g., board of directors).

4. Group Manager Forest Certification Program Data Management Tool

The Group Manager has created a Data Management Tool for the purpose of tracking all certified members in the Forest Certification Program. Information within the system will not be shared with any individual or agency except as required by the certification process. Information specific to a participant or participating group will be stored within the Data Management Tool but will only be visible to the participant, participant group, or the participant's appointed representative and the Group Manager staff associated with the program. Information will not be visible or made accessible to others using the site.

5. EOMF Forest Certification Policies and Procedures Manual

Current versions and future updates of the EOMF Forest Certification Program Policies & Procedures Manual will be kept with the following:

- Group Manager;
- CWG Members;
- Landowner Group Coordinators;
- Board Members of Landowner Groups, upon request;

- Members of the Landowner Groups, upon request;
- Community Forest Managers;
- Forest Managers; and
- Posted online

The Group Manager may provide a copy of the EOMF Forest Certification Program Policies & Procedures Manual to those interested in receiving a paper copy for a fee however; the Group Manager is not responsible for keeping those hard copy manuals up to date.

6. *Library*

The Group Manager will maintain a library of documentation relevant to the certification program at the EOMF office. This library will be comprised of but not limited to forest management planning guidelines, EOMF Information Reports, EOMF Forest Certification Program Policies & Procedures Manual, etc. Certain documents may also be accessible online to program participants through the secure EOMF Forest Certification Program Data Management Tool.

7. *Certification Body's Report*

Final reports prepared by the Accredited Certifier reporting on the results of the FSC and SFI Certification Audit of the Forest Certification Program will be summarized and posted on the Accredited Certification Body's web site and the Group Manager's website.

Policy 2.0 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites

Policy

Original date: June 2007

Revised date: December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of Pages: 2

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.5 – Consultation, Communication and Outreach Policy
- Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy
- Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy
- Policy 6.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that High Conservation Values (HCV) (FSC) and Special Sites (SFI) are being identified and maintained/enhanced within forests certified through the EOMF Forest Certification Program.

Definitions

HCV's are defined as forest values of outstanding and critical importance because of their high environmental, biodiversity, or landscape values. HCVs are specific to FSC.

Special Sites are sites that include geographically unique or culturally important features. Special Sites are specific to FSC.

The term *value(s)* is used throughout this policy when referring to both HCVs and Special sites.

Policy

There are three stages to the EOMF Forest Certification Program's HCV and Special Sites Policy; assessment, maintenance/enhancement, and monitoring.

1. Assessment

In this stage the values are defined according to their geographic location and in manner that is appropriate to the scale and intensity of the forest operation that are taking place. These values are then identified spatially on the landscape and the existence documented and maintained by the forest owner or manager.

Forests certified to both FSC and SFI standards can use the HCV process and requirements to meet Special Sites requirements. A separate analysis of Special Sites is not needed.

FSC defines 6 categories of high conservation values. For more detail and guidance on specific values that are encompassed by these HCV categories, please refer to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 1.7 for HCV's. The FSC Standard has a prescriptive list of various features that must be considered HCVs.

Category 1: Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values.

Category 2: Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.

Category 3: Forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems.

Category 4: Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g., watershed protection, erosion control).

Category 5: Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g., subsistence, health).

Category 6: Forest areas critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities)

Forests certified to SFI only, can forego the HCV categorization above but can use the process below to assist in identifying Special Sites. The process below is applicable to FSC Certified forests as well.

There are a number of different ways to seek out information that could be used to identify forests containing values, including:

- The location of ANSI's and provincially significant wetlands can be determined (i.e., OMNRF's Make a Map: Natural Heritage Areas) and mapped.
- The proximity of certified forest lands to protected areas can be determined and mapped (currently "protected area" refers to national and provincial parks).
- The local municipality may have a Significant Woodlands valuation tool that could be used to determine significant woodlands. These areas can be identified and mapped.
- The Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) can be used to determine areas of high conservation value. This is an OMNRF database for vulnerable and threatened species.
- The Forest Resource Inventory (FRI) data can be used to determine the locations of old forests in relation to the certified forests. This information would have to be "proven" to ensure its quality as the FRI is older information.
- OMNRF Species at Risk website.

Ground Observation – this is the EOMF's most important method of determining the locations of conservation values within the certified forests.

Landowners, the Group Manager, forest consultants, forest practitioners and forest workers spend a significant amount of time in the certified forests. These regular woodlot and forest walks serve as an ideal method for identifying unique and important values on the landscape as well as monitoring those unique conservation values.

Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP) – lands eligibility for the CLTIP program are determined by OMNRF. For certified landowners, if a portion of their property is identified as "conservation land" it will be indicated in their management plan. Virtual all CLTIP eligible lands are Category 1 HCVs.

2. Maintenance/Enhancement

In this stage it is ensured that forest management planning, operational planning and any silvicultural activities reflect the presence of the identified values and the need to maintain these values and/or work towards enhancing these values.

The guidelines for wildlife features, landscape level representation of forest features and species at risk will be followed as outlined in SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure, SOP 1.6 – , SOP 1.7 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites Standard Operating Procedure.

3. Monitoring

Once a value has been identified and any necessary management strategies are adapted to adequately protect the value. If operations occur in the area of the value, monitoring is required to ensure operations maintain or enhance the value. The monitoring stage can consist of regular walks in the certified forests by landowners, the Group Manager, community forest managers, forest consultants and forest workers. During these walks the individuals can monitor the known and identified values but they can also monitor the landscape for any new values. Operational monitoring is outlined in SOP 5.0 – Auditing, Internal Auditing, Monitoring & Assessment Standard Operating Procedure.

Policy 2.1 – Protection of Forest Values and Pest Management Policy

Original date: August, 2012

Revised date: December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of Pages: 1

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.5 – Consultation, Communication and Outreach Policy
- Policy 2.0 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites Policy
- Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy
- Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy
- Policy 6.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that forest values are conserved in accordance with sound management principles within forests certified through the EOMF Forest Certification Program. The policy ensures that forest values, including federally and provincially regulated species at risk (SAR), are identified by landowners and/or Forest Managers and that measures appropriate to the scale of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected values are implemented to mitigate potential negative impacts. It also addresses the need for effective pest management and restoration of natural forest conditions in the protection of forest values.

Policy

Available science, forest management guidelines and sound professional judgment shall be used to identify and develop conservation measures for forest values. Areas of Concern (AOC) with modified harvest operations should be established for forest values in accordance with SOP 1.5 Protection of Forest Values. Regulations for species at risk, as well as any future regulations issued under Endangered Species Act and the Species at Risk Act, will be observed.

Effective pest management methods are important for the protection of forest values including the control of native, non-native, and invasive pests. A healthy ecosystem is one of the best defenses against forest pests and disease.

Integrated pest management shall form an essential part of the management plan and approach, with preference given to preventive measures followed by biological and/or mechanical control methods before using chemical control methods (pesticides).

Protection of forest values includes the restoration of natural forest conditions where appropriate and the restoration of important tree species.

Notwithstanding the preference for non-chemical control methods, chemical control methods are recognized as an irreplaceable tool for forest managers who are controlling pests and invasive species. Pesticides are also essential in the restoration of hard-to-generate species such as oak and pine when used for competition control. Pesticides are safe, effective, and essential for maintaining and enhancing forest health when used judiciously, in the appropriate situations, and according to the label and best practices. There is a much greater risk to forest health in not using appropriate control methods than in the deployment of ineffective and inappropriate control methods.

Policy 2.2 – Major Natural Disturbance Salvage and Response Policy

Original date: October 2, 2022

Revision dates

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Policies

- Policy 2.0 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites Policy
- Policy 2.1 – Protection of Forest Values Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Major Natural Disturbance Salvage and Response Policy is to provide guidance on management documentation and planning required when a major natural disturbance necessitates the need for maintenance or salvage harvesting.

Policy

Major natural disturbances, such as fires, storms, floods, or insect damage can cause widespread mortality of trees, including entire stands and may warrant a salvage harvest.

This policy applies to major natural disturbances that occur swiftly, with often unpredictable consequences, over hours, days or weeks and require immediate action to ensure health and safety, forest health, and/or forest products are not compromised. It does not apply to relatively slow-moving, predictable disturbances such as damage from invasive species like emerald ash borer or beech bark disease.

A Forest Operations Prescription is not needed when undertaking maintenance work. Maintenance work following a disturbance generally meets most of the following criteria:

- The work would reasonably been judged by other forest managers or owners as routine forest maintenance work
- The removal of scattered downed, damaged, or diseased trees from trails, roads, or within stands
- The current successional trajectory of the stand is not meaningfully changed
- No tree marking is required (i.e. no judgement calls are needed on which trees to take or leave), other than boundary layout or flagging
- There is no meaningful risk posed to forest values as a result of undertaking the work (excluded are any forest values that were impacted by the disturbance itself)
- Logs may or may not be sold

A Forest Operations Prescription is needed when undertaking stand salvage work. Stand salvage following a disturbance generally meets most of the following criteria:

- The damage is major such that the successional trajectory of the stand is fundamentally changed
- There is judgement needed regarding what trees to remove or leave
- Tree marking is required

- Operations may impact important forest values or HCVs
- Logs are sold

Forest Operations Prescriptions for salvage harvests must meet SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescriptions Standard Operating Procedure, but may be simplified based on site conditions, as compared to a typical commercial harvest. They may also lack silvicultural detail due to the uncertain nature of how the stand will respond to disturbance.

It is the responsibility of the forest owner or forest manager to use discretion and professional judgment to determine when the work being undertaken after a disturbance is maintenance work or stand salvage work and if a Forest Operations Prescription is needed. When there is any doubt or uncertainty, the site should be inspected by a Registered Professional Forester to help make the determination.

Policy 3.0 – Processing, Manufacturing and Purchasing Policy

Original date: July, 2002

Revised date: December, 2003, March 2007, December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Policies:

- Policy 1.2 – Financial Policy
- Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy
- Policy 3.1 – Outsourcing Policy
- Policy 3.2 – Certified Maple Syrup Production Policy
- Policy 3.3 – Certified Wood Fibre and Non-Timber Forest Products Sales Policy
- Policy 3.4 – Labelling and Text Approval Policy
- Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy
- Policy 7.0 – Policy and Procedures Review and Renewal Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Processing, Manufacturing and Purchasing Policy is to ensure that the interests of landowners and community forest owners are maintained during purchasing negotiations and contracts. This policy encourages the support of local industry and the enhancement of the local certification value chain.

Policy

- Forest products extracted from a certified forest are the possession of the purchaser. So as to protect landowner and purchaser rights, the landowner and purchaser are encouraged to sign a Timber Sale Agreement. A sample form can be provided by the Group Manager.
- Forest Certification supports the stability of healthy communities. To this end the EOMF Forest Certification Program will preference and will encourage Landowners, Landowner Groups, and Forest Managers to use local processing, manufacturing and purchasing contracts where appropriate and legal to do so.

- Working with Landowners and Forest Managers, the Group Manager will help facilitate the fair compensation/remuneration and potential opportunities where forest owners may receive a premium for their product. The Forest Certification Program supports diversification of forest products coming from certified forests and supports finding suitable markets for these products.
- The EOMF Forest Certification Program will take advantage of existing markets where possible. There may however be new opportunities for supporting new market opportunities, especially for alternative, under-utilized and non-timber forest products. In these cases, the Group Manager will work with Landowners and Forest Managers to investigate new market opportunities.
- On an ongoing basis, the Group Manager investigates available markets for non-timber forest products in order to avoid dependence on a single forest product. Should markets develop for non-timber forest products, the Group Manager will develop appropriate pricing mechanisms at that time and include in a new "Non-Timber Forest Products Purchasing Policy".
- The Group Manager and CWG have developed a costing structure (see Policy 1.2 – Financial Policy) to ensure landowners and other participants share in the costs of implementation of forest certification. The Group Manager and CWG will continue to adapt this costing structure as the program evolves.
- Over time, it is one of the goals of the Certification Program to maintain a continuous supply of certified wood into the market.

This policy also ensures that CoC and labeling requirements are followed by all Forest Certification Program participants.

This policy also outlines the process required for the sale of certified maple syrup and certified firewood.

Policy 3.1 – Outsourcing Policy

Original date: April 2007

Revised date August 2012, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Policies:

- Policy 3.0 – Processing, Manufacturing and Purchasing Policy
- Policy 3.3 – Certified Forest Products Sales Policy
- Policy 3.4 – Labelling and Text Approval Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the outsourcing policy is to enable the production of a certified product in a situation where there is a break in the chain of custody. This policy ensures that the chain of custody is kept intact when a job is sent through a non-certified facility.

Policy

- The Group Manager and the non-certified company must sign an Outsourcing Agreement. The agreement must be sent to the Certification Body for approval prior to starting the job.
- The Outsourcing Agreement must be approved by the Certification Body
- The Outsourcing Agreement is meant to cover only one job. Additional Outsourcing Agreements must be submitted for additional jobs.
- The product labeling for outsourcing jobs will comply with Policy 3.4 – Labeling and Text Approval Policy.
- The non-certified company must have a good understanding of forest certification, chain of custody certification, the role of the Group Manager and Certification Body's role as the certifier and auditor.
- The Certification Body may visit the non-certified company to investigate the outsourcing agreement.
- All certified wood sent to an outsourcing company must be clearly marked as certified on the wood or on the load itself and on accompanying documentation (bills of lading, order forms).
- The exact certified wood that is shipped to the outsourcing company is the only wood to be used in the manufacturing of the desired outsourced wood product. No other wood will be used in the job other than that which is sent specifically for certified use.
- It is strongly preferred that processing of certified material be completed on certified lands rather than an uncertified-third party processing location and that only certified wood be located at the processing location.
- The annual report to the Certification Body from Group Manager must document dates and quantities (sent out and received) of outsourced materials.

- The certified wood products sent back to the certified company will be labeled clearly as certified on all accompanying documentation (sales slips, bills of lading, shipping invoices, etc.).
- The non-certified outsourcing company can make no claims of being a certified company. The company has no right to advertise or market their products as certified.
- The Group Manager will encourage any non-certified, outsourcing companies to pursue Chain of Custody certification.
- The Group Manager will work with any outsourcing companies to make Chain of Custody a viable option.

Policy 3.2 – Certified Maple Syrup Production Policy

Original date: June 2007

Revised: October 2022

Number of pages: 1

Complementary Policies:

- Policy 3.0 – Processing, Manufacturing and Purchasing Policy
- Policy 3.4 – Labeling and Text Approval Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the process required for the sale of certified maple syrup. This policy ensures that any maple syrup producers who are members of the Forest Certification Program and who wish to sell their syrup as certified are following the accepted Standards for the Certification of Maple Sugaring Operations in Canada. This policy also ensures that the interests of certified maple syrup producers are maintained through the certification process.

The requirements listed here and in the SOP 7.0 – Certified Maple Syrup Production Standard Operating Procedure are evaluated in addition to the forest management requirements outlined in this manual. In order to sell maple syrup as certified, producers must follow all of the forest management requirements for certification and these specific maple syrup production requirements.

Policy

- Interested maple syrup producers must first certify their forest with the Forest Certification Program.
- In addition to the Forest Management MoU, the maple syrup producer must sign a MoU with the Group Manager that indicates they will adhere to the requirements listed in this policy and within the SOP 7.0 – Certified Maple Syrup Production Standard Operating Procedure. A copy of the MoU template is available from EOMF Forest Certification Staff.
- The maple syrup producer must follow the SOP 7.0 – Certified Maple Syrup Production Standard Operating Procedure which outlines all operational requirements.
- The full and current Standards for the Certification of Maple Sugaring Operations in Canada are available through the Group Manager will be provided to all maple syrup producers who sign a maple MoU with the Group Manager. The Group Manager will continue to work with the Certification Body and FSC Canada to ensure the maple standards are reasonable and that they are streamlined with all other legal requirements for maple operations in Ontario.
- All invoices for certified syrup and sap sales must be documented and stored for inspection. These invoices must include the appropriate certification code.
- Maple syrup producers must follow Policy 3.4 – Labeling and Text Approval Policy. The Group Manager will provide approved labels, for a charge, to certified maple syrup producers that may be used on certified maple syrup.

Policy 3.3 – Certified Forest Products Sales Policy

Original date: June 2007

Revised: October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Policies:

- Policy 3.0 – Processing, Manufacturing and Purchasing Policy
- Policy 3.1 – Outsourcing Policy
- Policy 3.4 – Labeling and Text Approval Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the process required for the sale of certified forest products including wood fibre (fibre) and non-timber forest products (NTFP). The purpose of this policy is to ensure that certified forest owners who wish to sell their fibre or NTFP as certified are following the correct process.

The requirements listed are evaluated in addition to the forest management requirements outlined in this manual. To sell fibre or NTFP as certified, forest owners must follow all of the forest management requirements for certification and these specific requirements related to the sale of fibre or NTFP.

Definitions

Fibre means standing timber, logs, firewood, wood chips, bark, and lumber.

Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) means any physical forest product other than maple syrup or wood products.

Certified products means both fibre and NTFP.

Policy

This policy only applies when a product is being sold and marketed as certified. If the product is not being sold or marketed as certified, this policy does not apply.

The sale of other products that have been further processed, such furniture, moldings, sauces or foods made from both certified NTFP and non-certified products etc. is not permitted. These products must be sold without any certification claims.

The landowner must first certify their forest with the Forest Certification Program.

Certified landowner's or their forest managers, who wish to market products as certified must notify the Group Manager prior to commencing sales.

If the property is a private woodlot and their annual harvest is less than 15 bush cords, landowners selling certified firewood shall follow the guidelines set out in "Appendix B – Guidelines for Small-Scale Harvesting (Personal Use)". If their annual harvest exceeds 15 bush cords, or they are a community forest they shall follow the Standard Operating Procedures outlined in this manual for commercial harvesting.

To ensure that chain of custody is maintained, certified forests must only sell their certified products on the premises of the certified forested property, where produced or by delivery directly from the certified property. This is called the forest gate. For example, a certified forest can sell certified products at the end of the laneway to their certified forest, or deliver a load/shipment of certified products from their property to the customer, but they may not sell certified products at their neighbour's laneway or at a local market.

To sell certified products in a location other than where it was produced, the landowner must obtain Chain of Custody Certification.

The person responsible for maintaining the chain of custody of certified products until the point of sale at the forest gate will be as follows, and they must demonstrate an understanding of FSC or SFI Chain of Custody control systems:

- For private woodlots: The woodlot owner
- For community of commercial forests: The forest manager or designated employee

Certified products must be physically separated from non-certified products and the responsible person must demonstrate an effective system for this separation at all times until the point of sale.

It is strongly preferred and recommended that non-certified products be kept at a different site than certified products.

All sales, shipping, invoices and label documentation must clearly include the applicable Certificate Registration code and the claim that the product is 100% FSC or SFI Certified

Monthly records of harvest and sales volumes and segregation procedures must be maintained for 5 years. Sales volumes will be reported to the group manager on an annual basis.

Only products containing 100% Certified content may be sold and marketed as FSC or SFI certified. Products with less than 100% certified content may not be marketed with any Certification claims. Forest owners wishing to sell mixed products (certified and non-certified) must obtain a chain of custody certificate.

Certified forests selling certified products must follow Policy 3.4 – Labeling and Text Approval Policy. The Group Manager can provide an approved label, for a charge, to forests selling certified products.

Policy 3.4 – Labeling and Text Approval Policy

Original date: April 2007

Revised: October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 1

Complementary Policies:

- Policy 3.0 – Processing, Manufacturing and Purchasing Policy
- Policy 3.1 – Outsourcing Policy
- Policy 3.2 – Certified Maple Syrup Production Policy
- Policy 3.3 – Certified Wood Fibre and Non-Timber Forest Products Sales Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Labeling and Text Approval Policy is to ensure that the members of the Forest Certification Program are meeting the labeling and text approval requirements of the applicable certification system. This policy outlines the Group Manager's role in meeting these labeling and text approval requirements.

Policy

- Any use of FSC or SFI logos or trademarked FSC or SFI branding by any members of the Forest Certification Program must be approved by the Group Manager and the Certification Body.
- Any use of published text on the topic of FSC or SFI Certification by the members of the Forest Certification Program must be approved by the Group Manager (examples include; brochures, guidebooks, other printed materials, websites, signage).
- Every time the Group's Certification Codes are used on an FSC or SFI label, that label and the use of that label must be approved by the Certification Body. The Group Manager is responsible for seeking the approval from the Certification Body. No label containing the EOMF Certification Code shall be used without first being approved.
- For all FSC or SFI label, logo and text use, the Group Manager will send a request for approval and examples of the relevant materials to the Certification Body for approval.
- The EOMF will keep on file all requests for label, logo and text approval and all notices of approval.

Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, March 2007, October 2022

Number of pages: 3

Complementary Policies:

- Policy 1.0 – EOMF Forest Certification Program Structure Policy
- Policy 1.4 – Entering, Exiting and Expulsion Policy
- Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy
- Policy 4.1 – Corrective Action Request Policy
- Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy
- Policy 6.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy
- Policy 7.0 – Policy and Procedures Review and Renewal Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy is to establish and clearly define the roles of various participants in auditing and/or monitoring of all forest operations within the Forest Certification Program.

Definitions

SFI and FSC have similar requirements for internal monitoring and internal audits but use different nomenclature when talking about monitoring. The following table provides clarity on the language used throughout the rest of this policy and in SOP 5.0 Auditing, Internal Auditing, Monitoring, and Assessment Standard Operating Procedure.

Activity Description/Definition	Terms Used		
	Policy and Procedures Manual Terminology	FSC Terminology	SFI Terminology
Day-to-day monitoring of management and administrative activities that are inspected, assessed, reported, recorded, and/or tracked in various formal and informal ways to ensure activities meet management objectives, Policy and Procedures Manual requirements, and certification standards.	Monitoring	Monitoring	Monitoring
A formalized system that is used to ensure compliance of management and administrative activities with certification requirements.	Internal Audit	Internal Monitoring	Internal Audit

Policy

SOP 5.0 – Auditing, Internal Auditing, Monitoring & Assessment Standard Operating Procedure details the monitoring requirements including the number of inspections required to ensure that a participant's forest management plan objectives and strategies are being met and that operations are in accordance with the participant's forest management plan, the policies and procedures of this manual, and certification requirements.

“Like” Forest Management Units

Forest management units should be sampled for monitoring and internal auditing based on their similarities or “likeness”. Aspects that could influence similarities or differences include geography and forest type, tenure, ownership, size, and management activities. Currently, only ownership and management activities are differentiators for the certification program:

- **Geography:** The forests in the program are sufficiently similar in geography (mixed temperate forests) and do not need to be differentiated by geographic attributes
- **Tenure:** All lands in the program are private lands
- **Owners:** There are two types of owners in the program that would cause need for differentiation (1) Community Forests and (2) Private forest owners. Private forest owners include both commercial ownership and ownership by private individuals.
 - There is insufficient difference in management activities between commercially owned forests and forests owned by private individuals to warrant differentiation between the two for monitoring or internal auditing purposes.
- **Activities:** Management activities differ along the same lines as the owners above
- **Certification program fee structure:** The certification program fee structure is used for financial administration of the certification program and is not appropriate for classifying forests as similar or different for monitoring or auditing purposes.

FSC has specific internal audit sampling requirements based on area. This sampling will be used as the primary basis for FSC internal audits.

This above differentiation of “likeness” will be modified if new forests join the program that do not fit within the current categories of Community Forests or Private and Commercial forests.

Monitoring

Monitoring is a shared responsibility between all program participants. Day-to-day monitoring of operations will be carried out by forest managers and/or owners. The Group Manager is responsible for collecting summaries of monitoring results and reporting monitoring activities as per Policy 7.0 – Policy and Procedures Review and Renewal Policy and for secondary monitoring of management activities.

Monitoring completed by the Group Manager could include:

- during site visits
- through conversations with landowners or managers
- during the review of documents that landowners or managers provide to the Group Manager from time-to-time
- Other ways in which the Group Manager comes into contact with relevant information about a certified forest's activities

All monitoring documentation for landowners shall be kept in the landowners' or Community Forest Managers' respective files and making this available to the Group Manager upon request.

Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy will be followed for any disputes resulting from the identification of non-compliance.

Internal Auditing

The Group Manager is responsible for ensuring that Forest Certification Program participants are in compliance with their agreements or MoUs with the Group Manager. Internal audits will be undertaken by the Group Manager in compliance with applicable certification Standards and will include:

- Individual Landowners
- Landowner Groups and Landowner Group Coordinators (if needed)
- Forest Managers (if needed)
- Community Forests
- Any new entities into the program

For SFI Certified Forests: Each year a certified forest manager will be selected to audit and review the performance of the group manager.

The Group Manager is considered impartial for auditing purposes in relation to certified forests managers and owners within the group and vice versa.

NOTE: The role of the Group Manager as the internal “Auditor” must not be confused with the role of the auditor assessing suitability of the program for certification (accreditation body).

Internal audits will be undertaken to ensure compliance with the policies and procedures outlined in this manual and to ensure conformity with certification standards. This type of internal audit is more “operational” in nature. For example, under this type of internal audit, the Group Manager might assess a site after harvest to ensure that post-harvest standards have been met and that the forest manager overseeing that operation followed the proper reporting procedure.

SOP 5.0 – Auditing, Internal Auditing, Monitoring & Assessment Standard Operating Procedure will detail the Group Manager internal audit schedule. The key focus of the internal audits is to ensure that forest inspections are well documented and that they reflect any non-compliance.

Internal audits will also review participants’ compliance to the policies and procedures set out by the Group Manager. The Group Manager reserves the right to increase the frequency of internal audits described in the SOP for Auditing and Monitoring if it finds the results of internal audits warrants extra inspections. This would apply to participants (be it landowner or forest manager) with a high number of non-compliances.

Internal auditing documentation will be maintained by the Group Manager.

Policy 4.1 – Corrective Action Request Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, March 2007, December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Policies:

Policy 1.4 – Entering, Exiting and Expulsion Policy

Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Forest Operations Policy

Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Corrective Action Request Policy is to ensure that corrective action is taken when required in order that certification is maintained.

Policy

The following relationships are covered by the Corrective Action Request Policy:

- Auditor (accredited certifier) towards EOMF (Certificate holder)
- Group Manager towards Forest Manager
- Group Manager towards Landowner Group
- Group Manager towards Landowner Group Coordinator
- Group Manager towards Landowner
- Group Manager towards Community Forest Manager
- EOMF towards Private Commercial Forest Owner
- Forest Manager towards landowner
- Forest Manager towards forest operator
- Community Forest Manager towards forest operator

Upon finding a non-compliance with any policies in this Manual, the auditors (Certification Body or the Group Manager) will issue a Corrective Action Request to the program participant in non-compliance to give that participant the opportunity to correct or mitigate the non-compliance. Failing to do so may result in expulsion from the Forest Certification Program. Corrective action will mitigate the negative impacts of the problem to a reasonable extent.

After closing a corrective action request, the program participant will report, via annual reports or in another suitable manner as agreed upon by the Group Manager evidence that the corrective action has been completed, the root cause of the problem, and systems in place to prevent the problem from happening in the future.

The Group Manager will review the evidence provided and evaluate the entire situation to determine if changes to the group management system.

The Group Manager will retain documentation of the corrective action taken and any relevant subsequent actions.

This policy is also to be used in instances of repeated operational non-compliances of Standard Operating Procedures (refer to SOP 5.0 – Auditing, Internal Auditing, Monitoring & Assessment Standard Operating Procedure).

Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, March 2007, December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.2 – Financial Policy
- Policy 1.5 – Consultation, Communication and Outreach Policy
- Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy
- Policy 4.1 – Corrective Action Request Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Dispute Resolution Policy is to facilitate a fair, transparent and timely resolution of conflict resulting from activities occurring as part of the Forest Certification Program. The Policy will address grievances from individuals, landowners, contractors, consultants, third parties about program participants and from program participants about the management of the program.

Possible grievances:

- Suspension of Customary Rights Tenure claims and use rights
- Adjoining landowners
- Loss or damage
- Limited access to forest workers approved by EOMF

Examples of disputes – See below for process:

- Group Manager dispute resolution with Landowner Group
- Group Manager dispute resolution with Forest Manager
- Group Manager dispute resolution with Community Forest Manager
- Group Manager dispute resolution with Individual Landowner
- Forest Manager dispute resolution with Individual Landowner
- Forest Manager dispute resolution with Landowner Group
- Forest Manager dispute resolution with Forest Operator

Policy

1. Forest Certification Program Participants

EOMF dispute resolution with Program Participants:

- a. Conflicting management objectives and/or practices:** in cases of non-compliance of management objectives and/or practices the FM or the Group Manager would inform landowner with rationale of infringement by following the Policy 4.1 – Corrective Action Request Policy. If participant continues with non - compliance the FM or the EOMF would work through the Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy.

2. Stakeholders and affected parties impacted by the Certification Program

- a. Dispute resolution with Adjacent Landowners:** See below for process.
- b. Dispute resolution with other Affected Stakeholders and Parties:** Participant to try to resolve conflict with individual or group independently. See below for process.
- c. Dispute resolution with Indigenous Peoples:** The Group Manager will consult OMNRF's Resource Liaison Officers on the best way to resolve conflict. See below for process.

3. Process of Dispute Resolution

- a. Internal Mechanism between Parties** – when grievance occurs between program participants / between landowner and Forest Manager / between landowner or community forest and stakeholder or affected parties etc., parties should be encouraged to solve conflict independently. If this fails parties can approach the Group Manager.
- b. Forest Manager / Landowner Group Coordinator Involvement** – if appropriate (e.g., clarification of a technical requirement etc.) the forest manager or landowner group coordinator will attempt to resolve conflict. If this fails, parties are to approach the Group Manager.
- c. Group Manager** – The Group Manager -CWG will attempt to resolve conflict and document the appeal. If this fails, the Group Manager is to facilitate a process with use of an external mediator. Where the dispute involves a member of the Group Manager -CWG, that member will refrain from voting due to a conflict of interest.
- d. External mediator** – will be contracted by the Group Manager to attempt to resolve conflict when necessary. The mediator is to be agreed upon by parties involved. Failing resolution, a third party arbitrator will be involved.
- e. Arbitration** – a third party will be tasked with making the decision. The arbitrator is to be agreed upon by parties involved. Failing acceptance of decision, the Group Manager will facilitate termination of agreement.
- f. Termination of agreement** – the Group Manager in consultation with arbitrator will dissolve one party's involvement in the program. Complaint on this decision may lead to litigation.
- g. Litigation** – facilitated by the Group Manager or representative of the Group Manager .

The parties involved will pay for the cost of Dispute Resolution.

4. Dispute against the Group Manager

- a.** The Group Manager maintains the right to establish an independent review board. Members of this board would be at arms-length from the Group Manager and chosen by the parties involved.
- b.** Parties involved will seek and agree upon an external mediator. Failing resolution, an agreed upon third party arbitrator will be tasked with making the decision.
- c.** The parties involved will share the cost of Dispute Resolution.
- d.** Parties involved should retain all pertinent documentation related to the dispute.

Policy 4.3 – Active Forest Management Unit Policy

Original date: October 2, 2022

Revisions: July 2023

Number of pages: 1

Complementary Policies

- Policy 2.0 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites Policy
- Policy 2.1 – Protection of Forest Values and Pest Management Policy
- Policy 3.2 – Certified Maple Syrup Production Policy
- Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Active Forest Management Unit Policy is to define when a forest management unit (FMU) is considered active or inactive for the purposes of internal monitoring.

Policy

An FMU will be considered “active” if it is greater than 1,000 hectares or meets any of the following criteria for the preceding 12-month period:

- Joined the Group Certificate
- A harvest was completed that does not meet *Appendix B – Guidelines for Small-Scale Harvesting*
- Planting of more than 1 hectare of land
- Site preparation or tending that is greater than 1 hectare in size
- Use of pesticides
- New construction of, or substantial repairs to, forest access roads that are designed to handle cars, trucks, tractors, forestry equipment, or similar large, motorized vehicles. New construction of, or substantial repairs to trail used by the general public for motorized recreational vehicle use. Not included are:
 - Personal/private use trails designed for snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, walking, and/or biking
 - The use of motorized equipment during trail construction
- In-water work including, but not limited to, the maintenance or construction of culverts, bridges, and/or erosion and sediment control measures
- The status of the above items is unknown for a given FMU

An FMU that does not meet any of the above criteria will be considered “inactive”.

Policy 4.4 – Area of Management Activities Policy

Original date: July 2023

Number of pages: 1

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.0 – EOMF Forest Certification Program Structure
- Policy 1.4 – Entering, Exiting, and Expulsion Policy
- Policy 4.3 – Active Forest Management Unit Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Area of Management Activities Policy is to define the *area of active management* and how it is calculated for the purposes of SFI certification for landowners certified to *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*. This module has a limit of 20,000 hectares per certificate based on the area of active management. Therefore, landowners in the program must report their area of active management.

Definitions

The *area of active management* is defined as the area planned for harvest over the life of the current SFI certificate. This contrasts with the productive forest area, which, in forestry vernacular, is generally considered to be the total land base currently capable and available, now or in the future, for producing commercial timber. The calculation of this area will be based on the best available information such as operational plans, past harvest levels, or anticipated harvest levels. It is accepted that plans can change for unforeseen reasons or that future plans may not always be known to the specificity to define the precise area to be harvested.

Policy

Landowners certified to the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* will report to the Group Manager the total area available for active management within their FMU, called the *area of active management*, as part of the SFI Certification process. Any changes to this area will be reported to the Group Manager through annual reports.

Rationale

Landowners who qualify for the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* cannot reliably depend on the productive forest area being available in the future. When compared to very large forest management units (ex. >100,000 ha), the lands certified to this SFI module are relatively small, private lands. As such, they are disproportionately subject to the following inexhaustive list of internal and external factors that could dramatically change their productive forest area over time:

- Invasive species;
- Storm damage;
- Changes in the priorities of owners, management, or local public governance systems;
- Social values of the local community and stakeholders; and
- Ability to attract labour to complete forest management activities.

Policy 4.5 – Significant Negative Activities Policy

Original date: July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Policies:

Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Forest Operations Policy

Policy 4.1 – Corrective Action Request Policy

Policy 6.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Significant Negative Activities Policy is to provide guidance on what constitutes a significant negative activity for reporting purposes. Reporting and tracking of major negative activities ensures that their impacts can be mitigated and prevented in the future and makes annual reporting more efficient and transparent.

Policy

Forest owners and managers will report any significant negative activities that have taken place on certified lands to the Group Manager on an annual basis through annual reports. Notifying the Group Manager of these activities at the time they happen is strongly encouraged. Corrective action will be dealt with through Policy 4.1 – Corrective Action Policy.

Reportable activities meet any of the following criteria, when they occur in relation to the Forest Certification Program or on Certified Lands:

- Criminal acts committed by the forest owners, forest managers, or forest workers
- Criminal acts committed by third-parties on certified lands
- Illegal dumping of waste, hazardous substances, fill etc. which results in significant or long-term damage to forest values. Examples include:
 - Commercial dump truck loads of waste that cause damage to values
 - Hazardous waste that leaks and causes damage to values
- Major trespass including:
 - Unauthorized construction of infrastructure (roads, buildings, settlements etc.)
 - Clearing of land
 - Alteration of watercourses, wetlands, or water bodies
- Willful acts or gross negligence by forest owners, managers, or contractors leading to:
 - Significant deviation from forest management plans or forest operations prescriptions
 - Harm to SAR or SAR habitat
 - Harm to an AOC
- Any activity that would likely result in a finding of a major non-conformance by the certification body

Non-reportable activities are those that are minor in nature and include, but are not limited to:

- Routine trespass such as:
 - Minor encroachments from adjacent properties

- Occasional, non-permanent camping
 - Common non-permitted uses (ex. Motorized vehicle use outside of sanctioned areas)
 - Trail building
- Illegal disposal of household, construction, or yard waste in amounts and/or locations that post low risk to forest values
- Honest mistakes made by forest owners, managers, workers, users, or neighbours that are resolved in good faith and do not cause significant harm to forest values
- Other activities that cause minor, temporary harm to forest values

Policy 5.0 – Education and Training Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, March 2007, August 2012, December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 1

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.0 –Forest Certification Program Structure
- Policy 1.1 – Legal Requirements Policy
- Policy 1.3 – Minimum Requirements Policy
- Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Education and Training Policy is to ensure that all participants in the Forest Certification Program are well aware of sustainable forest management and certification and have all the necessary information and training to make informed decisions and to undertake forest operations in a safe and effective manner.

Policy

It is the responsibility of the Certification Working Group (CWG) through the Group Manager to ensure that all program participants are made aware of all relevant laws and administrative requirements.

The Group Manager will:

- Host training and program information sessions as required so all participants remain current with any new developments or requirements.
- In conjunction with the landowner and/or community forest manager, facilitate training and/or educational opportunities organized in a given forest. This could entail demonstration forests for forest certification.
- Provide support and expertise for workshop series' hosted by others related to the Certification Program.
- Provide or support relevant training courses where necessary in order that forest workers such as tree markers, loggers, etc. meet Policy 1.3 – Minimum Requirements Policy.
- Keep abreast of any developments related to Forest Worker training in the region.
- Maintain a mailing list of all participants, by e-mail, in order to quickly disseminate information.

Policy 6.0 – Indigenous Rights Policy

Original date: XXX

Number of pages: 1

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.1 – Legal Requirements Policy
- Policy 1.5 – Consultation, Communications, and Outreach Policy
- Policy 2.0 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites Policy
- Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Indigenous Rights Policy is to define the responsibilities of the various Group Members in meaningful upholding Indigenous Rights and the actions the Group will take to develop relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

Policy

Indigenous Peoples within the Certified Area

- There are approximately 20 to 24 First Nations with traditional territory within the current certified area
- The Government of Canada Officially recognizes some Metis Communities within Ontario. Some may have a small overlap of traditional territory with lands within the Forest Certification Program
- There are no Inuit with traditional territory within the certified area

Program Participant Responsibilities

All Program Participants will:

- Respect and uphold Indigenous traditional and treaty rights
- Act in good faith in all relationships with Indigenous peoples
- Work to improve their understanding of Indigenous values especially as they relate to forest values
- Identify the traditional territory(ies) within which their forest is located
- Protect any Indigenous values found within the certified area as per SOP 1.8 – Cultural Heritage Values Standard Operating Procedure
- Resolve any disputes with Indigenous Communities using Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy
- Respect and acquiesce the role of various Government agencies in managing relationships with Indigenous peoples and the outcomes of any negotiations coming from these relationships

The Group Manager will:

- Provide educational opportunities for program participants to support the implementation of this policy and promote good relationships with Indigenous Peoples
- Raise awareness about forest certification as it relates to Indigenous Rights
- Act as the main point of contact for Indigenous Peoples looking for information about private certified forests

Private Woodlot Owners and Private Commercial Forests owners are encouraged but not required to:

- Provide Indigenous peoples access to their woodlot/forest for the fulfillment of traditional or treaty rights, when the landowner feels comfortable to do so

Community Forests will:

- Maintain communications with local Indigenous Communities at a frequency based on the wants, needs, and/or capabilities of those local Indigenous Communities
- When requested, work with Indigenous peoples to come to a mutual agreement that allows access to Community Forest lands for the fulfillment of traditional or treaty rights
- Provide opportunities for Indigenous peoples, businesses and/or communities to participate in forest management planning processes, such as, but not limited to:
 - Participation in a Forestry Advisory Committee
 - One-on-one meetings where Indigenous peoples can provide feedback to forest management planning and activities
 - Public workplan comment or consultation processes
 - Open-houses
- Notify local Indigenous peoples, businesses and/or communities about the opportunity to participate in forest management planning

Policy 7.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: March 2007, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 1

Complementary Policies

- Policy 1.0 – EOMF Forest Certification Program Structure
- Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy
- Policy 3.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Annual Forest Reporting Policy is to ensure that information is readily available when requested in order to report on the status of the certification program and its various components to Canadian and International Model Forest agencies, the public, the Ontario and Canadian governments, and to meet certification requirements.

Policy

Forest Certification Staff will publish an annual report with a summary of the group's activities and conformance with certification requirements. The following information will be included and summarized:

- Total certified area
- Changes to membership, core activities, core requirements, or function of the group
- Description of main activities
- Summary of monitoring, internal audit, and formal audit results
- Status of actions from previous management reviews or corrective actions and trends in non-conformances
- Opportunities for future growth and improvement
- HCV (FSC) and Special Site (SFI) Information
- Progress towards meeting certification requirements
- Other information as deemed relevant by the EOMF

This information will be summarized on a landscape level scale and in the case of commercial and private woodlots, no names or exact locations will be released without permission from the owner. Upon request, this information may also be provided to the provincial and national State of the Forest authors, but not without following the Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy.

Reporting can be used to identify landscape level considerations which can be addressed in individual forest management plans and operations.

Policy 7.0 – Policy and Procedures Review and Renewal Policy

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: September 2002, March 2007, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 1

Complementary Policies:

- Policy 1.0 – EOMF Forest Certification Program Structure
- Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Policy and Procedures Review and Renewal Policy is to ensure that the policies and procedures contained in this manual are appropriate. This will ascertain the continued certificate status of the Forest Certification Program and to ensure that the latest developments regarding certification are incorporated. This policy will also detail the timing and details of such review.

Timing

Policies, procedures (SOPs), forms, templates, etc. will be reviewed once yearly at the anniversary of the issuance of the certificate(s), in preparation for the annual audit. A major review of the manual will occur once every 5 years. Upon approval of the CWG, the newly revised policies/procedures, etc., will be deemed part of this manual and used hence.

Policy

- The Group Manager will be responsible for undertaking the review of its certification policies and procedures, while ensuring appropriate input from participants.
- The Group Manager will gather information from government agencies, FSC, SFI, and other organizations to ensure that the policies and procedures remain current.
- The Group Manager will ensure that revised policies and/or procedures are distributed according to the Policy 1.6 – Document Control and Confidentiality Policy.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

SOP 1.0 – Planning Standard Operating Procedures

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, June 2007, December 2014, October 2022

Number of pages: 1

The Standard Operating Procedure for **PLANNING** includes:

- SOP 1.1 THE FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN**
- SOP 1.2 FOREST OPERATIONS PRESCRIPTION**
- SOP 1.3 PROPERTY BOUNDARY LINES**
- SOP 1.4 TREE MARKING**
- SOP 1.5 PROTECTION OF FOREST VALUES**
- SOP 1.5.1 PROTECTION OF SPECIES AT RISK**
- SOP 1.6 INVASIVE EXOTIC SPECIES**
- SOP 1.7 HIGH CONSERVATION VALUES**
- SOP 1.8 CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUES**

Purpose

The purpose of the **Planning Standard Operating Procedures** is to provide the foundation to allow forest operations to be undertaken in a planned and organized fashion while taking into account landowner objectives and values which may require special consideration.

SOP 1.1 – The Forest Management Plan Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, June 2007, August 2012, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.0 series – Planning
- SOP 2.0 – Access
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest
- SOP 4.0 Series

Standard Operating Procedure

- Each property accepted into the Forest Certification Program must have a Forest Management Plan that is appropriate for the scale and scope of management.
- A Forest Management Plan must include:
 - Property boundaries; and
 - Landowner objectives.

Note – the objective of harvesting wood for personal use should be part of the Managed Forest Plan. Please refer to Appendix B – Guidelines for Small-Scale Harvesting (Personal Use). If the harvest exceeds 15 bush cords per year, the commercial harvesting guidelines outlined in this manual should be followed.

- A description of the forest resource to be managed and its history.
- Maps describing the forest resource, including:
 - Existing and planned infrastructure;
 - Forest Resource Inventory;
 - all known forest values at the time of planning, including High Conservation Values (FSC) and Special Sites (SFI) and Species at Risk;
 - Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to indigenous peoples; and
 - Planned management activities.
- An assessment to determine the presence (and map) High Conservation Values (FSC) and Special Sites (SFI), as well as providing specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of these attributes, if found present.
- An updated list of species at risk (SAR) (i.e., flora and fauna) that are presently or potentially found in the forest (i.e., the forest is located in their distribution area), as indicated in federal, provincial or regional government listings, as well as other species that have been identified as needing special protection.

- The management plan must be implemented by forest managers meeting Policy 1.3 – Minimum Requirements Policy.
- Significant forest values shall be identified during the management planning process and the Forest Management Plan shall prescribe measures for their maintenance / enhancement (see SOP 1.4 – Tree Marking Standard Operating Procedure and SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure).
- The management plan must be kept current in order to incorporate results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information.
- For Community Forests: The FMP or a summary of the FMP is publicly available
- For FSC Certified community forests: Local communities, community and non-government organizations, forest workers, and the interested public affected by forest management are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in forest management planning.

SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescription Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: June 2007, August 2012, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 3

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.0 series – Planning
- SOP 2.0 – Access
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest
- SOP 4.0 Series

Definition

A forest operations prescription (FOP) is part of a long-term plan of treatments carried out during the life of the stand for the purpose of controlling the establishment, composition and growth of the forest. It represents the best silvicultural compromise among landowner objectives, site potential and sensitivity, current stand structure, composition, desired future forest condition, and condition and the protection of wildlife habitat and other natural heritage features.

Standard Operating Procedure

- A FOP will be prepared for each property where commercial forest operations are planned.
- FOP writers should reference their forest operations prescription to the appropriate OMNRF silvicultural and tree marking guidelines, OMNRF Forest Management Planning Guidelines as well as knowledge of the practice of silviculture and its scientific foundations and knowledge of the stand. Other related Standard Operating Procedures shall also be followed, such as SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure and **Error! Reference source not found.**
- An example Forest Operation Prescription Form can be obtained from the Group Manager.
- The FOP will contain the following minimum requirements, which are based on guidance provided by the Ontario Professional Foresters' Association (OPFA).

Prescriptions to be written or prepared under direction of a qualified Member of the OPFA

- Unless working under the supervision of another qualified Member, only Full Members (RPFs) able to demonstrate competence in the area covered by the prescription or Associate Members whose restricted scope of practice covers the functions and geography involved, may authorize/prepare the prescription.
- Non-members working under an exemption to Ontario's Professional Foresters' Act may write FOPs within their scope of professional practice (ex. Biologists or ecologists working on habitat management)

Location Ownership, Client and Contact Information

- This information must allow anyone unfamiliar with the site to be able to locate the property and understand exactly where within the property the prescription is to be applied. As well, it

must specify who the landowner is; who the Member's client is if not the landowner and how each may be contacted. A suitable map with the treatment boundaries and relevant details should be part of the prescription.

Site and Stand Condition

- The site and stand must be described in sufficient detail to allow markers and other evaluators to understand the stand's: composition, density, stage of development, regeneration status, quality, limitations, stand history and potential. As well, any sensitive or special features should be discussed here. This section provides a description of the data sources used, including any dates of the prescription approver's site inspections and inventory work. This background data should be retained on file for future reference for a minimum time period equal to the dates mentioned in Section 9. The prescription provides current stocking, stand structure or basal area figures relevant to the silvicultural system.
- An example Forest Stand Analysis Form can be obtained by contacting the Group Manager

Habitat, Biodiversity and Recreation Considerations

- Describe features to be protected or enhanced through tree marking (refer to SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure and SOP 1.7 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites Standard Operating Procedure), including guidelines for Species at Risk (SAR) (refer to SOP 1.6 – Protection of Species at Risk). Wildlife habitat decisions and direction must consider available science or management guidelines for the forest type and location and be appropriate for the landowner's objectives and property.

Last Silvicultural Operation

- The prescription must provide the date and a brief description of the last stand disturbance or silvicultural operation, to the best of the author's ability.

Objectives

- Prescriptions will have regard for existing approved management plans and through direct consultation with landowners (preferred) or through a landowner signed document will describe the i) long term desired future forest condition and ii) objectives for the current silvicultural intervention (tree marking), including an indication of which silviculture system is to be employed and what stage this operation is at (i.e., Regeneration cut vs. Removal Cut). The objectives should be realistic expectations given the site and current forest conditions.
- When post-harvest regeneration is an objective, regeneration plans including general targets and plans related to species selection, natural versus artificial regeneration, site preparation and tending needs, and estimated timelines will be addressed in the FOP. Specific regeneration plans can be developed post-harvest when regeneration needs become more apparent and do not need to be part of the harvest FOP.

Tree Marking Direction

- Where individual trees are to be marked this section provides the specific direction to the tree markers for the current operation. This must provide clear direction regarding residual density or stocking (i.e., basal area spacing and/or crown closure given the silvicultural system being employed); size, maximum number and location features for group selection gaps or other site specific applications. Most prescriptions will provide direction regarding the improvement of health, quality, species diversity, stand structure and/or size class distribution. Tree marking direction must consider the best available science or management guidelines for the forest type and location and be appropriate for the landowner's objectives and property.

Paint/Marks

- Where individual trees are to be marked a distinct approach will be used and recorded (symbols, paint colours, etc.).

Estimated Time of Next Silvicultural Intervention

- Provide the year and a brief description of the next logical silvicultural intervention that would continue on the path towards the long term objectives. The Prescription may also recommend the timing of stand assessments.

Author and Legal Approval

- The prescription must show the name of the prescription author, the date it was prepared and the stamp, signature and date of the member of the OPFA who has authored or has supervised the preparation and has the authority to approve this type of prescription in this location.

Reference to Other Documents

- Particularly on larger properties, some of the required information may be contained in other documents. Where it is not reasonable to repeat such information in the prescription and the documents are reasonably accessible, clear references and locations should be provided.

SOP 1.3 – Property Boundary Lines Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

SOP 1.1 – The Forest Management Plan

SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescription

SOP 1.4 – Tree Marking

Standard Operating Procedure

- The landowner is responsible for providing clear evidence of rights to the property. The landowner must prove that tenure rights exist. Examples of proof of ownership are land deeds, notices of property assessment or property tax receipts. This must be demonstrated during the Pre-Inspection Visit for entry into the Forest Certification Program (see Policy 1.4 – Entering, Exiting and Expulsion Policy).
- Identification of property boundaries will be shown on a Map Property boundary lines must be established and delineated before harvesting begins so as to be unambiguous and acceptable to neighboring landowners.
- It would be beneficial if the landowner, or a representative, be available for information and/or assistance in locating the boundary line.
- Preliminary layout of property boundaries can be based upon aerial photographs and OBM maps. Property boundaries are sometimes obvious due to agricultural fields, hedgerows, natural features or distinct changes in forest condition.
- Property boundaries through continuous forest must be verified on the ground using physical evidence such as old fence lines, survey markers or corner posts where they exist.
- If no evidence of property boundaries can be located, the landowner is notified that they must come to agreement with the adjacent landowner on the property boundary prior to forest operations.
- Properly delineated boundaries on the ground will help in protecting the property from trespass, illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorized activities. The landowner and forest manager will monitor property boundaries as part of regular forest operation inspections. Where necessary, the landowner and forest manager will take reasonable steps to stop or prevent unauthorized through activities such as posting signage, patrolling or walking the property regularly, or installing a gate.
- In the case where neighboring property is owned by First Nations and there are boundary issues; the landowner, forest manager and/or the Group Manager
- will correspond with the OMNRF Resource Liaison Officer to seek advice and assistance in coming to a mutually acceptable agreement.

- Should a dispute arise between adjacent landowners regarding the location of the property boundary, the landowner should follow the dispute resolution process in Policy 4.2 – Dispute Resolution Policy. No harvesting will occur until an agreement has been reached with respect to the property boundaries.

SOP 1.4 – Tree Marking Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, August 2012, December 2014, October 2022

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescription
- SOP 1.3 – Property boundary Lines
- SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values
- SOP 2.0 – Access
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest
- SOP 4.0 Series
- SOP 5.0 – Monitoring

Standard Operating Procedure

Tree marking is the critical step between preparing a silvicultural prescription and timber harvesting for partial cutting practices such as the uniform shelterwood, single-tree or group selection, or clear-cut with seed trees silvicultural systems. The tree marker has a significant influence on the ecology and economics of that forest and its dependent communities. Tree markers must be knowledgeable in silviculture, tree and wildlife biology and forest economics in order to choose the right trees to mark for harvesting. Policy 1.3 – Minimum Requirements Policy outlines the tree marker requirements.

- Tree markers will make a work agreement with the forest owner (private land or community forest land).
- All tree marking is carried out by or directly supervised by tree markers certified by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and approved by the Forest Manager or Landowner.
- Implementation of the Forest Operations Prescription (FOP) will result in trees being retained for non-timber objectives (e.g., den and nest trees, mast trees, isolated conifers, super canopy trees, trees with a stick nest, uncommon or unique trees) as outlined in SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure. Tree markers will follow the Standard Operating Procedure to provide for other benefits of the forest such as biodiversity and wildlife habitat.
- Tree markers will take measures to reduce the introduction and/or spread of invasive exotic species.
- Some localized associations of trees within a stand may pose situations which require appropriate alteration of the prescription at the marker's discretion. Such small-scale alterations, however, should not result in a deviation from the prescription for the overall stand and must be reported back to the FOP author.
- The tree marker may request a review of the prescription if actual forest conditions make implementation difficult or impossible.

- Other established landowner objectives, such as specified trees or species to leave, or wildlife habitat interests, must be consistent with the FOP and observed when tree marking.
- A tree marker must exercise considerable knowledge regarding log quality, tree identification, disease symptoms, indicators of defect, silvics and response to canopy release and general silviculture.
- Where the forest manager is a different person from the tree marker, the forest manager will inspect the tree marking to ensure that properties scheduled for harvest satisfactorily reflect the silvicultural prescription for that site prior to the start of harvest operations. If a formal audit is performed, the procedure outlined in the SOP 5.0 – Auditing, Internal Auditing, Monitoring & Assessment Standard Operating Procedure shall be used.
- The appropriate reserve and/or modified Area of Concern prescription will be applied to any significant new value encountered during marking that was not previously identified in the silvicultural prescription. These new values will be reported to the Forest Manager and/or the landowner as soon as feasible and prior to the start of harvest operations.
- Tree markers are to reference the FOP for minimum protection standards for some forest values. When in doubt, the tree marker will seek advice from the Forest Manager or the FOP author.

SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2002

Revision dates: December 2003, June 2007, August 2012, December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.1 – The Forest Management Plan
- SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescriptions
- SOP 1.4 – Tree Marking
- SOP 2.0 – Access
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest
- SOP 4.0 Series

Definition

Area of Concern (AOC): An area adjacent to an identified value that may be affected by some, or all, aspects of forest management activities.

Standard Operating Procedure

Forest values needing special treatment include:

- Lakes, streams, wetlands, seeps;
- Critical wildlife habitat features (e.g. raptor nests, deer wintering areas, etc.);
- Recreation and cultural designations, such as hunting camps and cottages;
- Sites of historical (e.g., cemeteries) or natural significance;
- Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to Indigenous peoples;
- Environmentally sensitive areas;
- Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI); and
- Species at Risk (SAR) and their habitats.

A prescription must be developed for AOCs in order to prevent, minimize or mitigate any potentially adverse effects of forest management activities on identified forest values. These AOC's will be included in the forest operations prescription (FOP). In developing prescriptions for AOCs for different forest values, the Forest Manager will consult the references in Table 3.

The Forest Manager may use their professional judgment to interpret the information provided in the references in Table 3, particularly in light of the differences in the scale, intensity and type of forestry operations taking place under the umbrella of the EOMF Forest Certification Program. AOC prescriptions must be documented in a Forest Management Plan or FOP and justified by the Forest Manager if different from direction provided by best available science.

A prescription for an AOC may include:

- “Reserves”, where operations are prohibited;
- “Modified areas”, where there are specific conditions on regular operations;
- Restrictions on the scheduling of operations, location of roads and landings; and
- Measures for controlling the intensity of harvest (e.g., basal area, canopy closure, size of cut).

New forest values that are identified during tree marking or during forest operations will be reported to the Forest Manager as soon as feasible, and an appropriate AOC prescription will be developed and implemented. New information regarding the protection of forest values will be incorporated as new sites are planned for operations.

Table 3. Sources for Direction for the Protection of Forest Value

Clarification of the standards for developing prescriptions for AOCs can be obtained through consulting the following sources of direction for the protection of forest values:

- Current Editions of OMNRF's Forest Management Planning guides including:
 - Forest Management Guide for Conserving Biodiversity at the Stand and Site Scale
 - Ontario Tree Marking Guide
 - A Silvicultural Guide to Managing Southern Ontario Forests
- Species at Risk websites for Ontario or Canada
- Forest Management Plans for Crown Management Units – select a Crown Management Unit near you; select the most recent Forest Management Plan, Plan Text, and Tables relevant to your operations

Key sources of information for identifying forest values include:

- Landowners or landowners adjacent to the property in question
- Regular users of community forest land
- Land Information Ontario (LIO)
- Ontario's Natural Heritage Information Centre
- Forest Operation Prescription writers
- Tree markers
- Forest operators
- Forest Management Guides

SOP 1.6 – Protection of Species at Risk Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: August 2012

Revised date: December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of Pages: 2

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.1 – The Forest Management Plan
- SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescriptions
- SOP 1.4 – Tree Marking
- SOP 1.5 – Areas of Concern
- SOP 2.0 – Access
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest
- SOP 4.0 Series

Definition

Species at Risk (SAR) are any species listed as rare, threatened or endangered by the federal, provincial or any regional government. This includes species protected under the Ontario Endangered Species Act (ESA), which came into effect on June 30, 2008.

Further, under the Forest Stewardship Council definition of SAR, managers must also consider other vulnerable species as “at risk”. Species that are under consideration for formal listing by a government agency are thus considered SAR. Furthermore, species that have been identified by non-governmental agencies or groups, if the designation or concern is the result of efforts by a diversity of agencies or groups, considering a diversity of vulnerability factors, are also included in this definition of SAR.

Standard Operating Procedure

As part of measures to protect SAR and their habitat, the forest management plan must contain an updated list of SAR (i.e., flora and fauna) that are presently or potentially found in the forest (i.e., the forest is located in their distribution area) as indicated in federal, provincial or regional government listings, as well as species that have been identified as needing special protection. The Group Manager maintains a list of all SAR found or likely to be found within the certified area of the group.

Before and during the implementation of forest operations, a SAR screening process should be initiated. This process requires first identifying SAR that could be found during operations and then actively looking for SAR while carrying out activities on the ground such as tree marking, inventory and prescriptions.

Table 4. Operational screening procedure to determine SAR that is presently or potentially found in the management area.

1. Check with the local Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forests (OMNRF) District office or Natural Heritage Information Centre to obtain an SAR list.
2. Consult the OMNRF's Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) to determine if there are any element occurrences for the property in question.
3. Check with any relevant regional government bodies, non-governmental organizations or other organizations to determine if there are other species requiring special protection as per the SAR definition provided above.
4. When carrying out operational activities (e.g., inventory, harvest prescriptions, tree marking) forest managers and practitioners will assess the management area for potential SAR.

Where plans exist, or are under development by the government to protect the habitat and populations of SAR, the manager must implement all measures relevant to their activities and cooperate with efforts to control inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting. In the absence of such measures, safeguards must be established by forest managers to protect SAR and their habitat. This includes establishing conservation zones and protection areas, or Areas of Concern (AOC), which are appropriate to the scale of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. AOC prescriptions for SAR should prevent, minimize or mitigate any potentially adverse effects of forest management activities on SAR and should be developed following a precautionary approach.

In the absence of habitat descriptions and regulations, the Forest Management Guide for Conserving Biodiversity at the Stand and Site Scales is a useful resource for developing AOC's for some species. Consultation with MNRF or consulting biologists who specialize in SAR may also be necessary to develop an effective AOC.

SOP 1.7 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites

Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: December 2003

Revised date: June 2007, August 2012, December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 1

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.0 series – Planning
- SOP 2.0 series – Access
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest
- SOP 4.0 Series

Definitions

HCV's are defined as forest values of outstanding and critical importance because of their high environmental, biodiversity, or landscape values. HCVs are specific to FSC.

Special Sites are sites that include geographically unique or culturally important features. Special Sites are specific to FSC.

The term *value(s)* is used throughout this policy when referring to both HCVs and Special sites.

Standard Operating Procedure

Key operational considerations that shall be followed by landowners and Forest Managers with respect to values include:

For FSC HCVs only:

- Forest Managers must have a HCV Report and maintain a list of all HCV which indicates whether the HCV has been operated in. This list must be supplied to the Group Manager on an annual basis.
- HCV reports must be presented to the Group Manager whom will maintain a current report on file for each of the Community Forests.
- The CWG will provide guidance and technical support to participating Community Forest Managers in the identification and accepted management of HCV areas.
- Best and accepted management practices that employ a precautionary approach are employed for the HCV.

For SFI Special Sites Only:

- Forest Managers must maintain a list of all special sites.
- This list is provided to the Group Manager on an annual basis

For all values:

- Specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the particular value shall be included in the forest operations prescription.
- Sites where forest operations have been undertaken will be monitored annually to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes. Refer to SOP 5.0 – Auditing, Internal Auditing, Monitoring & Assessment Standard Operating Procedure.
- Access roads or trails that could compromise the value in the long term will be decommissioned after use.
- In some cases the presence of a value may indicate the need for full protection of and surrounding the HCV. In other cases silvicultural activities will not harm the value and can take place in and around it. The level of protection will vary depending on the nature of the HCV.

SOP 1.8 – Cultural Heritage Values Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: June 2007

Revised date: August 2012, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 3

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.0 series – Planning
- SOP 2.0 series – Access
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest
- SOP 4.0 Series

Definition

Cultural heritage is defined in Ontario's Forest Management Guide for Cultural Heritage Values as the memory, tradition and evidence for the historical occupation and use of a place and the consideration of this evidence in society. Cultural heritage is defined in relation to the community which derives some sense of its identity from a shared history of beliefs, behaviors or practices. The value of cultural heritage is regionally specific and the scale of that region is dynamic; the value could exist for one village or concession road or it could exist for an entire municipality or county.

In Ontario, there are 5 Classes of Cultural Heritage Values of which 4 are applicable to the EOMF Forest Certification Program. These are:

Archaeological Sites: These are locations registered with the Ontario Ministry of Culture. These sites contain an artefact or any other physical evidence of past human use or activity that is of cultural heritage value or interest.

Cultural Heritage Landscapes: A defined geographical area of heritage significance which has been modified by human activities and is valued by a community. Cultural heritage landscapes may include built heritage features such as buildings, bridges, docks, dams or wrecks such as abandoned vehicles and machines. Cultural heritage landscapes could also include linear features such as roads or railways.

Historical Aboriginal Values: Mapped places with cultural heritage value to an Aboriginal Community.

Cemeteries: Sites where human remains have been buried and could contain grave markers, fences, mausoleums, or other structures.

Standard Operating Procedure

All cultural heritage values are Special Sites under SFI and will be managed based on Policy 2.0 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites Policy and SOP 1.7 – High Conservation Values and Special Sites Standard Operating Procedure.

The procedure for cultural heritage values is as follows;

1. Identify value

2. Record location of value
 3. Determine strategy for the protection of the value
- When a given cultural heritage value is identified, it will be recorded within management planning documents for the given certified forest.
 - The guidelines in Table 5 should be considered when developing an Area of Concern (AOC) prescription for cultural heritage values. For more detail, plus guidelines and best management practices to protect and manage cultural heritage values, refer to Ontario's Forest Management Guide for Cultural Heritage Values.
 - For private land, cultural heritage value information will not be made public. If a value is mapped, its exact location will not be given, unless the landowner gives full permission for the location and the nature of the value to be made public.
 - If the value has been identified by a landowner on their own land, that landowner shall be given an opportunity to be a part of developing a protection and/or operating strategy for the value. The landowner shall also include the strategy within their forest management plan and provide an updated copy to the Group Manager.
 - Community forest managers shall work towards mapping cultural heritage values for community forests. The values can be identified by the Forest Manager and members of the public. Information about the value and the location of the value may be made public. This will be determined based on the individual value.
 - For any cultural heritage value identified within the Forest Certification Program that may be compromised by having its location revealed to the public, the Group Manager, landowners and forest manager shall ensure that the location of the value will be kept confidential.

Table 5: Guidelines for the protection of Cultural Heritage Values

Cultural Heritage Value Class	Operational Prescription
Archeological Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the AOC one of the following must occur: • AOC is a 200m reserve measured from the defined center of the site. No harvest, renewal or tending operations are permitted. Marking of the reserve boundaries must not draw attention to the value. • If the boundary of the site has been delineated through an Ontario Ministry of Culture Stage 3 archaeological assessment, the AOC is a minimum 10m reserve from the delineated boundary. • If a stage 4 excavation has been completed to meet Ontario Ministry of Culture standards and a recommendation has been made by a licensed archaeologist that no further archaeological work is required, no reserve is required.
Cultural Heritage Landscapes	<p>Point Features (e.g., bridges, buildings, docks, dams, old wrecked or abandoned vehicles or machines):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 m reserve should be established from the edge of the value. • Line or Polygon Feature • For polygon values the minimum AOC is the area occupied by the value plus an additional 10 m reserve around the value. • For roads and railways, documentation and mapping of the feature is sufficient.

Table 5: Guidelines for the protection of Cultural Heritage Values

Cultural Heritage Value Class	Operational Prescription
Historical Aboriginal Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must work with a qualified individual to determine appropriate protection for the value.
Cemeteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AOC consists of a reserve. Reserve dimensions include the land in which interments are located to 15 m from cemetery boundary.• Conditions on Harvest, Renewal and Tending• Reserve (land in which interments are located to 15 m from cemetery boundary):• No harvest, renewal or tending operations are permitted.

SOP 2.0 – Access Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2002

Revised Date: August 2012, October 2022

Number of pages: 4

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.1 – The Forest Management Plan
- SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescription
- SOP 1.3 – Property Boundary Lines
- SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values
- SOP 2.0 – Access
- SOP 4.0 Series
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest

Purpose

The purpose of the Standard Operating Procedure for Access is to ensure proper planning, use and reclamation of access roads and landings.

General Access

- Access design and construction shall be consistent with the standards outlined in the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) Forest Management Guide for Conserving Biodiversity at Stand and Site Scales and Environmental Guidelines for Access Roads and Water Crossings. Guidelines and best management practices in these guides shall be considered and applied where appropriate.
- The forest manager and/or the Group Manager will review access issues with landowners, where appropriate, to ensure new access is appropriate and to suggest methods for control and limitation of liability.
- Road construction may be identified in the Forest Management Plan (only developed for those management plans where harvesting activity is a management objective) and/or as per the FOP.
- Before construction of any road or water crossing in an Area of Concern (AOC), ensure all considerations with respect to road and water crossing planning, location, use management strategy and other mitigation techniques are consistent with the specific direction for the associated value as described in SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure.
- Fill material for roads built below the high water level, within the floodplain of a water feature, will be erosion resistant and/or protected from erosion.
- Any exposed mineral soil between the height of land and the water crossing, or within 100 m of the water crossing, whichever is less, will be trimmed to a stable angle and be protected from erosion so sediment will not enter the water after construction.

- Access will be designed with the long-term management of the forest in mind to maximize viability and efficiency of the network.
- Involve landowner in all access decisions, where appropriate.
- Inform landowner of loading and hauling schedule, where appropriate.
- Significant damage caused to access route as a result of the logging operation will be repaired promptly and the site restored to proper condition.
- Access plan must respect all identified forest values by applying the appropriate protection described in SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure.
- Access may be decommissioned if cultural heritage values, High Conservation Value Forests or species at risk (SAR) have been identified and may be compromised by the increased access.
- Approaches to harvest areas along access routes will have signage similar to: “Proceed with Caution – Logging Operation Ahead”.

Water Crossings

- Prior to the installation or replacement of a water crossing, consult with the local OMNRF office and/or local Conservation Authority to determine the need for a permit.
- Culvert or bridge opening size shall be determined by hydrologic and hydraulic analyses, in accordance with design procedures developed for Ontario.
- Selection of the type of water crossing structure, its location and its capacity to pass water and allow for the movement of fish, will consider:
 - Possible negative effects on the form and function of the undisturbed natural channel and its floodplain;
 - The fish species present and the impact of the crossing structure on them, as required by the Fisheries Act; and
 - Whether the water crossing is over navigable waters.
- Appropriate Areas of Concern (AOCs) will be observed where applicable as described in SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure.

Installation and Maintenance of Water Crossings

- Those responsible for installation and maintenance will monitor operations and select operating practices, materials, and mitigation techniques at each water crossing to prevent the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat or the impairment of water quality. Harmful alteration, disruption, or destruction of fish habitat is not permitted without DFO approval.
- The installation of a water crossing will not result in the impediment of fish passage; mitigative techniques will be applied if the structure has the potential to impede or block fish migration or passage.
- At any time of year, the free movement of water and fish will not be blocked or otherwise impeded, except for brief periods during construction and as approved by OMNRF and/or the local Conservation Authority.

- The removal of stream boulders is generally not acceptable, except where necessary for installation of a crossing structure which retains a natural streambed (e.g., a bridge).
- Construction operations that may enter a water feature (i.e., in-water work) or that may potentially cause sediment to enter a water feature are not to occur during periods of fish spawning, incubation, or fry emergence, unless approved by OMNRF and/or the local Conservation Authority. Timing restrictions are provided in SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure. If warranted, local OMNRF offices and/or local Conservation Authority may vary timing dates and mitigation measures based on local knowledge.
- Prevent sediment from entering the water features by using erosion and sediment control techniques.
- During construction and maintenance of a water crossing, contamination of a water feature by foreign materials such as lumber, nails, fuel, oil, or herbicides is not permitted.
- Blasting with a potential impact on fish or fish habitat will only be done following approval from DFO.
- Any temporary fill, culverts, refuse, etc. will be removed from the construction area and properly disposed of upon completion of the crossing.
- If using temporary winter-only crossings, materials other than ice and snow will be removed from the stream prior to spring break-up.
- After construction, on-site inspections will be made by the proponent to confirm these standards are being met.
- These standards are applicable to previously installed water crossings when they are replaced or upgraded due to sub-standard safety, environmental, or operational reasons.

Road and Landing Layout and Construction

- Prior to the construction of a new road within a floodplain, consult with the local OMNR office and/or local Conservation Authority to determine the need for a permit.
- Roads should be flagged or marked prior to harvesting.
- All timber on roads and landings must be harvested prior to construction.
- Roads will be kept to a minimum width (roads and landings should not cover more than 2% of the forested area). Landings should be kept to less than 0.15 ha, unless approved by the forest manager.
- Avoid locating new roads and landings within AOCs as described in SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure.
- Where possible, locate roads and landings on high ground, in well-drained areas away from water bodies and riparian areas.
- Roads and landings are to avoid streams, springs, seeps, and other areas of groundwater discharge where possible.
- Roads shall be constructed so as not to impede natural drainage.

- Materials moved during construction such as grubbed or earth filled material, will not be piled where they block drainage courses.

Access Across Other Lands

- If it is deemed necessary to access a certified forest property via an adjacent property, permission must be granted by the adjacent landowner.
- With permission from the adjacent landowner, signage will be erected as per the General Access SOP if harvesting operations are planned.
- If it is deemed necessary to construct a landing on adjacent property, an agreement between the landowner and the adjacent landowner must be negotiated.
- Any agreement and/or any conditions on access permission across other lands should be documented.
- All related SOPs apply on the adjacent lands.

Post-harvest

- Remove and properly dispose of all garbage, equipment parts and other refuse.
- Reasonable efforts should be made to utilize merchantable wood to avoid excessive slash piles at the landing.

SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2002

Revised Date: August 2012, December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 4

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescription
- SOP 1.4 – Tree Marking
- SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values
- SOP 2.0 – Access
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest
- SOP 4.0 Series
- SOP 5.0 – Auditing, Monitoring and Assessments
- SOP 6.0 – Environmental Protection

Purpose

The purpose of the Standard Operating Procedure for harvesting activities is to provide minimum operational standards for harvest operations.

General

- The harvest contractor and landowner (private or community forest) must sign a contract prior to the start of commercial logging operations, a sample of which can be obtained from the Group Manager
- Operators must meet minimum requirements as outlined in Policy 1.3 – Minimum Requirements Policy.
- Operators must use all safety equipment and will work in a recognized, safe manner, as per the Workplace Safety North and Occupational Health and Safety Act (OH&SA) RSO 1990 guidelines.
- Any significant value found during the operation must be reported to the forest manager, the landowner and/or Group Manager and the appropriate protection applied as per SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values Standard Operating Procedure.

Extraction Trails

- Extraction trails will not cover more than 20% of the forested area for selection cutting and 30% for shelter wood removal harvests and commercial thinning.

Rutting (Compaction)

- The rutting standards that must be met are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Rutting/Compaction Standards

Compaction Category	Compaction per skid trail	Maximum distance of compaction per landing	Operational status
Minor < 30 cm	Can be maintained over the length of the trail.	Can be maintained over the entire system of main skid trails	None
Major > 30 cm but < 60 cm	120 m	480 m	If maximum distance is greater than 120 m, cease skidding on an individual trail. If maximum distance is greater than 480 m, cease skidding to an individual landing.
Extreme > 60 cm	30 m	120 m	If maximum distance is greater than 30 m, cease skidding on an individual trail. If maximum distance is greater than 120 m, cease skidding to an individual landing.

Utilization

- A tree must not be felled so that its stump height is greater than 30cm, except that a tree may be felled so that its stump height is not greater than its diameter measured outside the bark at the point of cutting. Regardless of diameter, no tree may be felled so that its stump height is greater than 60cm. Forked and coppice stems may result in stump heights beyond this standard.
- **Leaving Merchantable Timber of Any Length:** It is a wasteful practice to leave any merchantable timber of any length in any part of a harvest. Merchantable timber is defined in Table 7.

Table 7. Merchantable Timber Definitions

Species	Minimum Top Diameter
In cases of a felled conifer other than white pine, red pine, or hemlock where ½ of its total content is sound.	10cm (4 inches)
In cases of white pine, red pine, or hemlock where ½ of its total content is sound.	16cm (6 inches)
Any hardwood log other than poplar and white birch of which more than 1/3 of the total content is sound.	16cm (6 inches)
Note: All measurements are taken outside the bark at the smaller end and recorded in centimeters.	

- **Leaving merchantable trees:** It is a wasteful practice to leave any merchantable trees standing that the logger has the right to harvest on any part of a harvest area. Leaving merchantable trees means:
 - A standing conifer, poplar or white birch tree where more than ½ of the total content of wood is sound; or
 - A standing hardwood tree other than poplar or white birch, where more than 1/3 of the total content of wood is sound
- **Leaving lodged trees:** It is a wasteful practice to leave lodged trees in an area where harvesting operations have been carried on. Lodged refers to a tree that for other than natural causes does not fall to the ground after being:
 - Partly or wholly separated from its stump; or
 - Displaced from its natural position.

Logging Damage

- A minimum of 90% of the residual trees (stems of 10cm DBH and greater) must be free of major damage. Major damage is defined in Table 8.

Table 8. Definitions of Major Damage

Type of Injury	Considered Major When:
Bark Scraped Off	Trees 10 to 31 cm at diameter at breast height (dbh): Any wound greater than the square of the dbh (i.e., for a 10 cm dbh tree a major wound is greater than 100 cm ² .)
	Trees 32+ cm at dbh: Any wound greater than 1,000 cm ² .
	Note: If the wound has ground contact (and for yellow birch) a major wound is considered to be 60% of the size shown above for all size classes (i.e., 60 cm ² for a 10 cm tree or 600 cm ² for any tree 32+ cm at dbh).
Broken Branches	More than 33% of the crown is destroyed.
Root Damage	More than 25% of the root area exposed or severed.
Bole of Tree Broken Off	Any tree.
Bent Over	Any tree tipped noticeably.

Wood Tracking

- To maintain wood and wood products under the FSC or SFI Certified label, the wood and/or wood product must be tracked from the point of origin to its destination using the Forest Certification Program Bill of Lading – booklets will be provided to program participants.
- All terms and conditions for the use and completion of Bills of Lading must be followed.

Bill of Lading Terms and Conditions:

1. All truckloads of wood hauled from the Seller's property must have a fully completed "Bill of Lading" attached.
2. Distribution of "Bill of Lading":
 - a. 1st copy (White) – landowner deposit in box at harvest site
 - b. 2nd copy (Yellow) – to be retained by the contractor/purchaser
 - c. 3rd copy (Blue) – stays in the book
 - d. 4th copy (Manilla) – destination (with scale tally)
3. The Group Manager will supply the "Bills of Lading" and will provide instruction on how to complete the document. All parts/sections of the "Bill of Lading" are to be fully completed.
4. Failure to complete the "Bill of Lading" or properly affix the proper identification markings on the load prior to leaving the Seller's property may be reason to terminate this contract between the landowner and the contractor.
5. All unused books of "Bills of Lading" are to be returned to the Group Manager.
6. The "Bill of Lading" shall include the Group's certification code (FSC® C018800).

SOP 4.0 – Pests, Regeneration, Invasive Species, and Pesticides Standard Operating Procedures

Original date: July 2023

Number of pages: 1

The Standard Operating Procedure for **PLANNING** includes:

SOP 4.1 PESTICIDE USE

SOP 4.2 FOREST RENEWAL

SOP 4.3 INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

SOP 4.4 INVASIVE EXOTIC SPECIES

Purpose

The purpose of the **Pests, Regeneration, Invasive Species and Pesticides Standard Operating Procedures** is to provide the foundation for the protection of forest health and the renewal of forests.

SOP 4.1 – Pesticide Use Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2023
Number of pages: 3

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.1 – The Forest Management Plan
- SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescriptions
- SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values
- SOP 4.0 Series
- SOP 6.0 – Environmental Protection

Purpose

The purpose of the Standard Operating Procedure is to clarify how pesticides will be used within the certified area.

Standard Operating Procedure

- Management systems will use non-chemical methods of control when technically and economically feasible and when non-chemical methods provide similar levels of control
- Pesticides may be used to selectively treat undesirable vegetation, pests, or disease to:
 - Regenerate species that are uncommon in the forested landscape
 - Regenerate hard to regenerate species such as, but not limited to, pine and oak
 - Establish desirable vegetation on old field sites
 - Manage invasive species
- When used, pesticides must be registered for use in Canada by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulation Agency under the Pest Control Products Act and classified for use under Ontario's Pesticides Act and associated regulations
- The narrowest possible spectrum pesticides will be chosen for each application while still providing adequate control
- Pesticides will be applied according to the label
- Chemicals, containers and liquid and solid non-organic wastes (including fuel and oil) shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at off-site locations. Empty pesticide containers must be disposed of according to the Pesticides Act.
- Only people with the appropriate pesticide license(s) may apply pesticides, except where there are exemptions under the Pesticides Act, in particular:
 - Landowners may apply Class D pesticides on lands they own
- For FSC Certified Forests:
 - All pesticide applications require a pesticides application plan and an Environmental and Social Risk Assessment
 - FSC Prohibited Pesticides are not to be used
- For SFI Certified Forests:
 - World Health Organization Class 1a and 1b pesticides are not to be used.

SOP 4.2 – Forest Renewal Standard Operating Procedure

*Original date: July 2002
Revised Date: August 2012
Number of pages: 3*

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.1 – The Forest Management Plan
- SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescriptions
- SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values
- SOP 4.0 Series
- SOP 6.0 – Environmental Protection

Standard Operating Procedure

- Renewal operations, site preparation, and tending operations will be prescribed in a Forest Operations Prescription (FOP) when regeneration is a target of the silvicultural objectives.
- Renewal operations do not need to be specified in a Forest Operations Prescription (FOP) when regeneration is not a target of silvicultural objectives (ex. Commercial thinning)
- Practice careful logging practices to protect advance regeneration where appropriate
- Natural regeneration of native species is preferred.
- It may be necessary to plant trees to augment natural regeneration.
- Planting shall focus on native species that are well-suited to site and climatic conditions
- Regeneration timelines should as prompt as reasonable possible:
 - For clearcuts:
 - 2 planting seasons for artificial regeneration
 - 5 planting seasons for natural regeneration
 - For partial harvests:
 - Same as for clearcuts, where technically possible
 - When not technically possible or desirable, the shortest reasonable time will be used, prescribed, and justified in an FOP
- Ensure origin of planting stock is from appropriate OMNRF seed zone(s)
 - Using seed from seed zones that are anticipated to fare well under future climate change is an acceptable practice when using best available information to choose seed
- Planting of known invasive exotic tree species is not permitted (ex. Black Locust, Manitoba Maple, Norway Maple, Scots Pine, etc.)
- Planting of non-native species that are not invasive shall be limited (ex. European larch, Norway spruce).
- Measures shall be taken in Forest Operations Plans and afforestation activities to prevent and minimize outbreaks of pests, diseases, fire and invasive plant introductions, for example, not planting white pine in high risk white pine blister rust areas, minimizing soil disturbance in site preparation, using healthy planting stock from appropriate seed zones, etc.

SOP 4.3 – Integrated Pest Management and Forest Fire Prevention Standard Operating Procedure

*Original date: July 2002
Revised Date: August 2012
Number of pages: 3*

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.1 – The Forest Management Plan
- SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescriptions
- SOP 1.5 – Protection of Forest Values
- SOP 4.0 Series
- SOP 6.0 – Environmental Protection

Integrated Pest Management

- Integrated pest management shall form an essential part of the management plan, with primary reliance on prevention and biological control methods rather than chemical.
- Protection operations will be prescribed in the FOP when appropriate and/or necessary.
- Measures shall be taken to prevent and minimize outbreaks of pests, diseases, fire and invasive plants.
- The local OMNRF Forest Health Technical Specialist should be notified of significant incidence of insect or disease conditions that are detected in the woodlot.

Forest Fire Prevention

- Forest workers are encouraged to take the appropriate fire training if available (for example, S102 – Industrial training course for basic forest fire suppression).
- Consideration will be given to the forest fire hazard prior to undertaking forest operations.
- Forest workers shall have the appropriate fire suppression equipment at the work site based on government regulations.
- Forest workers will be familiar with their responsibilities under the Forest Fires Prevention Act.
- Forest workers will immediately report forest fires to the local municipality stating:
 - The exact location of the fire;
 - The condition of the fire;
 - The fuel type; and
 - The size of the fire.

SOP 4.4 – Invasive Exotic Species Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003, August 2012, December 2014, October 2022, July 2023

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.1 – The Forest Management Plan
- SOP 1.2 – Forest Operations Prescription
- SOP 4.0 – Series
- SOP 5.0 – Auditing, Monitoring and Assessment

Definition

Exotic species - An introduced species not native or endemic to the area in question

Invasive exotic species – a non-native plant that threatens the survival of native species

Standard Operating Procedure

Landowners and Forest Managers should learn to recognize the most troublesome exotic species that could be present in or might invade their forest. Measures must be taken to prevent and minimize outbreaks of pests and invasive plant introductions and spread. Integrated pest management must form an essential part of these measures, with primary reliance on prevention and biological control methods rather than chemical pesticides and fertilizers.

Measures shall be taken to prevent invasive plant introductions by treating early infestations quickly with appropriate control measures. Some examples are listed in Table 8.1.4 of "A Silvicultural Guide to Managing Southern Ontario Forests".

Invasive species will not be used in forest or ecosystem management activities within the certified area.

There are various sources that can be consulted for the latest information on how to identify and control invasive species. These include

- Canadian Forest Service's Forest Invasive Alien Species of Canada website (www.exoticpests.gc.ca)
- Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters' Invading Species Awareness Program website (www.invadingspecies.com)
- Invasive Species Centre (www.invasivespeciescentre.ca)
- US Forest Service's Non-native Invasive Species website (www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/invasive-species)

The Ontario Woodlot Association website also contains a guide to controlling invasive woodland plants (www.ontariowoodlot.com).

During the inventory, landowners and forest managers should note the presence and relative abundance of invasive exotic species.

The following actions could help reduce the incidence of invasion of these species and sometimes prevent their spread altogether:

- Avoid or minimize ground disturbance
- Regularly monitor the woodlot and adjacent land
- Remove plants when they first appear in the woodlot or adjacent to it
- Wash equipment before bringing to the site and before moving to another. For direction on inspecting and cleaning equipment to prevent the spread of invasive species, please refer to the Ontario Invasive Plant Council's Clean Equipment Protocol for Industry (www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/resources/technical-documents/),

The following is a list of some common invasive exotic species:

- Barberry
- Dog-strangling Vine
- Smooth Brome Grass
- Garlic Mustard
- Glossy Buckthorn
- Exotic Honeysuckle Species
- Common Buckthorn
- Japanese Knotweed
- Dame's Rocket
- Norway Maple
- Purple Loosestrife
- Amur Maple
- Black Locust
- Manitoba Maple
- Common Reed (Phragmites)
- Flowering Rush
- Wild parsnip
- Scots Pine

SOP 5.0 – Auditing, Internal Auditing, Monitoring & Assessment Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2002

Revised: October 2022

Number of pages: 6

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.0 series – Planning
- SOP 2.0 series – Access
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest
- SOP 4.0 – Renewal, Tending and Protection

Purpose

The purpose of the Standard Operating Procedure is to detail the type of monitoring required, as well as the schedule and minimum frequency of inspections required to ensure that the policies and procedures of this manual are being followed and certification requirements are being met. Methodologies have been included where appropriate.

Audits will not be limited to forest operations. Other items that could be included in an audit are proof of contracts or agreements (for example, between landowner and logger), reporting mechanisms, forest operations inspections by forest managers and/or landowners, updates of Managed Forest Plans, etc.

Monitoring

Monitoring is a shared responsibility between all program participants. Day-to-day monitoring of operations will be carried out by forest managers and/or owners. The Group Manager is responsible for collecting summaries of monitoring results and reporting monitoring activities as per Policy 7.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy.

Monitoring can, and often will, use rapid assessment methods such as ocular assessments. Rapid assessments are appropriate when the attribute being monitored is clearly in or out of conformance with management objectives, the Policy and Procedures Manual, and/or Certification Standards.

Formalized or more labor-intensive monitoring protocols are only needed when there is debate as to the conformance of the attribute being monitored or when an elevated level of accuracy is needed.

Monitoring will be completed before, during, and after operations as needed to ensure compliance with this policy and procedures manual and certification standards. Monitoring results will be used to correct active operations as appropriate and to inform how future operations will be conducted.

All community forests will report a summary of monitoring results annually and include sufficient information such that the Group Manager can fulfill Policy 7.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy .

Private woodlot owners and commercial forest owners will report a brief summary of activities such that:

- the sample is not less than $x = \sqrt{n}$ where x is the sample and n is the total number of private and commercial landowners in the program
- the Group Manager can fulfill Policy 7.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy

Internal Audit Program Structure

The Group Manager will maintain an annual internal audit program that will monitor program participants against the applicable certification standards and this Policy and Procedures Manual. The monitoring program will have the following components and attributes:

- Internal auditing will be performed over the calendar year and will include a selection of landowners based on like management units as per Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy
- Like FMUs (Policy 4.0 – Auditing and Monitoring of Annual Operations Policy) will be sampled as follows based on whether they are active or inactive (See Policy 3.3 Active Forest Management Unit Policy):
 - Active Like Units: $y = 0.6\sqrt{x}$
 - Inactive Like Units $y = 0.1\sqrt{x}$
 - Where y is the number of FMUs to monitor and x is the total number of FMUs
 - At least 25% will be selected at random while the rest will be based on a risk assessment based on activities and active vs inactive status
 - Selection will focus on different FMUs each year unless there is a need to revisit an FMU
- The Group Manager will physically visit all active units that are subject to internal audits but can audit inactive units remotely;
- For FSC Certified forests:
 - a sample of 2 to 3 Principles will be audited such that all Principles are subject to internal audits over the course of the certificates period of validity
 - The pesticides policy, trademark policy, excision policy, and chain of custody standard will be audited annually
- For SFI Certified Forests
 - A sample of 2-3 Objectives will be monitoring such that all Objectives are subject to internal audits over the course of the certificates period of validity
 - The Trademark Standard will be audited annually
- Evidence reviewed will include relevant documents to the elements of the standards being audited, such as prescriptions, contracts, site inspections, and environmental surveys.
- The Group Manager and Forest Owner or Manager can use the monitoring methods and protocols below, or other methods deemed appropriate, to measure and audit forest activities
- Physical measurement of activities is not required where conformance with applicable standards, standard operating procedures, or management planning documents has been clearly achieved.
- A summary of the results of the annual monitoring will be published as per Policy 7.0 – Annual Forest Reporting Policy and will be prepared ahead of the annual Certification Body audit.
- For SFI Certified Forests: Each year an SFI certified forest manager will be selected to monitor and review the performance of the group manager
- Records of the internal audit will be kept on file by the Group Manager

Tree Marking

- The Forest Manager must approve the tree marking operation prior to the commencement of harvest operations.

- Tree marking operations may be audited by a Certified Level II Ontario Tree Marker.
- The Ontario Tree Marking and Audit Form may be used to record and summarize audit findings.
- For an audit to be acceptable, the Tree Marker must have a Tree Marking Quality Assessment of 90% or greater in each silvicultural system and/or conifer or hardwood harvest block, or if basal area is applicable, be within 10% of the target basal area described in the FOP.

Recommended Procedure

- Tree marking audits involve the installation of sample plots within which all trees larger than 10cm DBH are assessed.
- Data must be collected in a uniform manner across all sites and distributed evenly across the stand. Remote sensing data is used to complete an unbiased stratification of the area. Plots are to be placed a minimum of 80 meters apart and 40 meters from stand edges.
- To assess tree infractions, a minimum of 10 plots for up to 20 hectares and 1 plot for every 5 hectares thereafter are to be installed. Stand infractions can be assessed by walking between plots and checking AOCs and Integrated Resource Management (IRM) considerations.

Forest Operations

- The forest manager (and, optionally, the landowner) is responsible for monitoring forest operations on properties they are responsible for.
- The minimum frequency of monitoring operations is detailed in Table 9. Some factors to consider in determining the frequency of monitoring activities are type of operation, scale and intensity of operation, relative complexity and fragility of the environment, values identified on site, compliance history of operator and number of ongoing operations at any given time.
- The results of monitoring are to be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the Forest Management Plan.
- The Policy 4.1 – Corrective Action Request Policy will be followed for repeated non-compliances in regard to Auditing and Monitoring.

Table 9. Minimum Schedule of Monitoring

Activity	Community Forest Manager's Requirements	Forest Manager's Requirements (Private)	Landowner's Requirements	Group Manager

Tree Marking	Will follow and implement FOP	Will notify landowner of start-up Will follow and implement FOP	There are no formal requirements Landowner is encouraged to monitor tree marking progress and report any potential problems to forest manager Grant access to property	There are no formal requirements. The Group Manager can carry out a site visit to observe tree marking activities and provide direction and support if required
Harvesting (includes logging damage assessments, wood utilization, verification of areas of concern, skid trails, landings, rutting, wood tracking)	Will monitor and inspect harvest operations as required based on scale of operations. Will complete a final harvest inspection. Will report harvest volumes to the Group Manager annually.	Will notify landowner of start-up. Will monitor and inspect harvest operations as required based on scale of operations Will complete a final harvest inspection	There are no formal requirements. Landowner is encouraged to monitor logging progress and report any potential problems to forest manager. Grant access to property. Will report harvest volumes to the Group Manager annually.	The Group Manager will visit active operations on an as needed basis
Access Roads and Water Crossings	Will obtain appropriate permits, implement best management practices.	Will obtain appropriate permits, implement best management practices.	There are no formal requirements. Landowner is encouraged to monitor progress and report any potential problems to forest manager. Grant access to property	The Group Manager will visit any road building operations or any water crossing installations on an as needed basis
Renewal, Tending and Protection	Will report any use of herbicides and pesticides, and trees planted to the Group Manager on an annual basis.	Will report any use of herbicides and pesticides, and trees planted to the Group Manager on an annual basis.	Will report any use of herbicides and pesticides to the Group Manager on an annual basis .Landowner is encouraged to monitor progress and report any potential problems to forest manager Grant access to property	Records of annual tree planting activities as well as herbicide and pesticide use will be kept on file by the Group Manager.

Policies / MoUs / Agreements	Forest Manager or a designated person will sign a MoU with the Group Manager.	Forest Manager will sign an MOU with the Group Manager.	Will sign an MOU with the Group Manager or the forest manager.	The Group Manager will undertake periodic audits to ensure compliance of landowner, landowner group, community forest managers and forest managers with policies, agreements/MoUs. Results will be kept on file at by the Group Manager.
HCVs (FSC) and Special Sites (SFI)	The Forest Manager will establish a program consistent with the applicable Standards to monitor the status of the HCV identified in their HCV report or special sites and include effective measures to maintain or restore the values.	Identify HCV or Special Site and implement measures to maintain or enhance the value.	Identify HCV or Special Site and implement measures to maintain or enhance the value	The Group Manager will include HCV and Special Sites as part of the Internal Auditing program.

* Note that the “Landowner Requirements” in the above table are not applicable for certified community forests. In the case of certified community forests only the forest manager and Group Manager requirements in the above table should be considered, as well as the need to grant access to the community forest for all auditing and monitoring activities.

Assessments

1. Logging Damage Assessments

- Logging damage will be assessed by the standard outlined in *SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure*.
- Ocular assessments may be adequate where operations are obviously within the standard outlined in *SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure*.
- To perform formal logging damage assessments, either a prism plot sampling method or a fixed area method can be used.
- When sampling under either method the plots should be randomly located throughout the stand, ideally by locating the plots prior to entering the stand. Plots should be measured whenever they fall within the stand (including skid trails).
- Logging damage will not be assessed on trees marked for removal.
- The sample intensity “rule of thumb” shown in Table 10 should be used:

Table 10. Sampling Intensity Guidelines

Size of Harvest Block (ha)	Number of Plots
----------------------------	-----------------

1 – 5	10
6 – 10	15
11 – 20	20
21+	$= 20 + [(area - 20)/4]$

- For example, a 60 ha. harvest block should have 30 plots $= 20 + \frac{60 - 20}{4} = 30$ plots
The sample intensity may vary to match the variation found within the stand, i.e. fewer plots are required in a uniform logging job.
- Calculating logging damage:

Major Logging Damage = $\frac{\text{total major damaged trees}}{\text{total residual trees}} \times 100\%$

- Results of the assessment are to be recorded on the form found on the EOMF Forest Certification Program Data Management Tool.

2. Skid Trail Coverage

- Skid trails will be assessed to ensure compliance with *SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure*.
- Ocular assessments may be adequate where operations are obviously within the standard outlined in *SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure*.
- Skid trail coverage is assessed by strip sample.
- Results of assessment(s) are to be recorded on the form found on the EOMF Forest Certification Program Management Tool.
- The length and average width of skid trail segments which are encountered in the sample are recorded and used to calculate the percent skid trail coverage:

E.g.: Total skid trail length encountered within strip cruise = 1,000 feet
Average width of skid trails (measured at right angles) = 15 feet
Area of strip cruise = 66 feet wide x 1500 feet long
% skid trail coverage = $\frac{15 \times 1000}{66 \times 1500} \times 100\% = 15.15\%$

The assessment will measure the length of rutting (refer to *SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure* for a definition of rutting) encountered during the sample and calculate the percentage of rutting as compared to the total skid length encountered:

E.g.: Total skid trail length encountered = 1,000 feet
Length of skid trails encountered with major and extreme rutting = 110 feet
% major and extreme rutting = $110/1,000 \times 100\% = 11\%$

3. Regeneration Assessments

- The methodology for regeneration assessments will vary dependent upon stocking and could be visual “walk through”.
- Regeneration assessments will make note of the presence and relative abundance of invasive exotic species.

4. Access Roads, Landings and Water Crossings

- Roads, landings and water crossings will be inspected to ensure compliance with SOP 2.0 – Access Standard Operating Procedure.

5. Utilization

- Utilization will be assessed by the standard outlined in the SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure.
- Ocular assessments may be adequate where operations are obviously within the standard outlined in SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure.
- Utilization is assessed with a strip sample using the same methodology used for assessing logging damage.
- The number of infractions by type of infraction found within the total fixed area sampled is extrapolated over the harvested area.
- Results are recorded on the Utilization Summary Tally Sheet That can be provided by Certification Program Staff.
- In regard to Wasteful Practices as defined in SOP 3.0 – Harvest Standard Operating Procedure, one wasteful practice constitutes an infraction. However, during normal harvesting activities minor amounts of wasteful practices will often occur due to operating conditions. Where the deviation is of minor significance and tolerable for the factors/conditions encountered, the Auditor or Monitor will work with the operator to improve utilization.

Tolerable – while technically an infraction, the level of deviation is reasonable. If there is room for improvement, follow-up inspections may be required.

Not Tolerable – the level of deviation could have been avoided; improvement is necessary. Actions and follow-up inspections are required.

Operating Conditions/Factors to be considered in making the assessment of tolerance:

Distribution
Forest Type
Geography/Topography
Harvest Method Wood Supply to Mill

Forest Product Values
Silvicultural Harvesting System
Impediment to Renewal or Other Values

SOP 6.0 – Environmental Protection Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: July 2002

Revised date: December 2003. October 2022

Number of pages: 2

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

SOP 2.0 – Access

SOP 3.0 – Harvest

SOP 4.0 – Renewal, Tending and Protection

Standard Operating Procedure

Collection, Storage, and Disposal of Waste

- Waste, materials, and equipment generated from, or used in, forest operations shall be promptly removed from the forest and properly and legally disposed of following operations
- Waste that poses a risk to the forest, such as hazardous wastes, will be stored off-site whenever possible, transported in a manner that minimizes spill risk, and disposed of at an appropriate hazardous waste disposal and/or collection site
- Where feasible and facilities exist, waste will be recycled

Abandoned Buildings

- Abandoned buildings on the site will be secured, when necessary, to avoid harm to visitors and contamination to the environment
- The securing of abandoned buildings that have cultural value will consider this cultural value when determining securement methods and will minimize damage to the cultural value of the building

Spill Cleanup

- Contractors will have and maintain emergency intervention fuel and oil spill kits, with the capacity of up to 25 litres.
The forest manager and/or landowner will periodically check for the presence and condition of the spill kits during forest operations inspections.
All Spills are to be:
 - Stopped
 - Contained
 - Cleaned up immediately
- The contaminated material is to be collected and placed into a waterproof container or bag for proper disposal.
- Spills greater than 10 litres or any spills into water are to be documented on the Fuel & Oil Spills Accidental Discharge Report Form that can be obtained from the Group Manager and the spill must be reported to the Group Manager.

Spill Prevention

- Contractors are responsible to carry out regular inspections and maintenance of their machinery to assist in preventing spills.
Machinery must always be serviced in a safe place where oils and fuels cannot enter water bodies.
Mobile fuel tanks will be in compliance with Ontario Gasoline Handling Act.
Chemicals, containers and liquid and solid non-organic wastes (including fuel and oil) shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at off-site locations.

Spill Reporting

- Program participants shall report spills to MOE as per the following guidelines for leaks and spills reporting:

MOE GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING SPILLS OF MOTOR VEHICLE FLUIDS:

Spills less than 100 litres (22 imp. gal.); and in an area restricted from public access; or spills less than 100 litres that do not enter any water or are not likely to enter any water; and not likely to cause any adverse effects other than clean up and restoration and arrangements for clean-up and remediation are made and carried out immediately; do not need to be reported to MOE

Spills Greater than 100 litres; or greater than 25 litres (5 imp. gal.) in an area with public access; or any spills that do enter any water or that may enter any water; or less than 100 litres that may cause any adverse effects other than clean up and restoration; or less than 100 litres if clean up and remediation steps are not carried out immediately.

MUST be reported to MOE

MOE Spills Reporting Phone Number: 1-800-268-6060

SOP 7.0 – Certified Maple Syrup Production Standard Operating Procedure

Original date: June 2007

Revised: October 2022, July
2023

Number of pages: 3

Complementary Standard Operating Procedures:

- SOP 1.0 series – Planning
- SOP 2.0 – Access
- SOP 3.0 – Harvest
- SOP 4.0 – Renewal, Tending and Protection

Purpose

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to ensure that any maple syrup producers who are members of the EOMF Forest Certification Program and who wish to sell their syrup as certified, are following the accepted FSC Standards for the Certification of Maple Sugaring Operations in Canada.

The requirements listed here and in the Certified Maple Syrup Production Policy – Policy 2.3 are evaluated in addition to the forest management requirements outlined in this manual. In order to sell maple syrup as certified, producers must follow all of the forest management requirements for certification and these specific maple syrup production requirements.

The following Standard Operating Procedures are taken directly from the *NEPCon Interim Standard for Assessing Forest Management in US & Canada – Maple Sugar NTFP Addendum (2012)*.

Standard Operating Procedure

Regulations:

- Maple tapping and processing equipment must meet all applicable licensing laws, sanitation standards, quality control and packaging and labeling requirements

Public Notice:

- The Landowner and/or Forest Manager should communicate with neighbors, local communities and any potentially affected groups or individuals when sugarbush management activities have the potential to negatively impact them.

Management Plan Considerations:

- The management plan shall contain all of the requirements outlined in SOP 1.0 – Planning Standard Operating Procedures.
- The management plan shall specifically address and incorporate sugarbush management objectives and related silvicultural prescriptions that may be used.

- The sugarbush management section of the forest management plan shall be technically sound and sufficiently detailed, given the size, complexity and intensity of the sugarbush operation. The plan shall include a description of the intensity of sap harvesting, and justification for this intensity. The plan shall also include a description of the implemented harvesting technique and the equipment used.
- Sugarbush management practices shall be periodically adjusted to incorporate new scientific or technical information as required.

Operations:

- Landowners and Forest Managers shall keep up-to-date on sugarbush management and syrup processing developments and technology.
- Sap collection equipment shall be installed with minimal damage to trees.
- Sap collection infrastructure (i.e. collection pipelines) and management activities do not negatively impact wildlife populations and other forest resources.
- The intensity, frequency and seasonality of sap harvest, by area and volume, shall be based on a combination of scientific study and/or long-term local experience and knowledge and does not exceed sustainable levels.
- Allowable tapping rates, sap harvest rates and best management practices shall be followed in the forest.
- Sap harvest levels shall be adjusted when populations exhibit decline or weakened condition.
- Prior to operations, the Landowner and/or Forest Manager shall identify sensitive elements on the site in order to minimize the environmental impacts of sap collecting operation through recognized practices (i.e. diversity at the stand level, wildlife, species at risk, sensitive soils, etc.).
- Sugarbush management and sap collection practices shall minimize impacts to forest composition and soil structure and fertility.
- The intensity of sugarbush management shall be based on an understanding of species and site productivity and potential limitations.
- Unused sap collection materials and any waste generated from sugaring operations shall be removed from the forest and disposed of appropriately.
- Sugarbush harvesting practices shall be periodically adjusted to incorporate new scientific or technical information as required.
- Workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper tapping and processing techniques.
- Use of pesticides in maple sap harvest areas shall be prohibited, unless said chemicals are allowed under local, national or international organic standards or they can be justified to control exotic and invasive species that pose a significant threat to the long-term health and viability of the sugarbush and forest ecosystem

Monitoring:

- Sugarbush monitoring shall be incorporated into the overall monitoring plan for the forest management operation. Monitoring shall provide data on forest changes upon which management prescriptions can be updated.
- The volume and source of sap collected and the volume and grades of syrup produced shall be recorded for future tracing.
- The sugarbush monitoring plan is technically sound and identifies/describes monitoring of the following:
 - Changes in the maple component of the forest, maple growth rates and regeneration;
 - Changes in forest health over time;
 - Presence of pests; and
 - Harvesting levels including number of taps used, volume of sap collected and volume and grades of syrup produced.

Chain of Custody:

- All invoices for certified syrup and sap sales must be documented and stored for inspection. These invoices must include the group's certification code (FSC® C018800).
- Where a producer has 100% certified syrup or sap it must be kept separate from non-certified products and it must be clearly distinguished as certified through labels, marks, or other means.
- Only products containing 100% FSC Certified sap or syrup content may be sold and marketed as FSC certified. Products with less than 100% certified content may not be marketed with any FSC Certification claims.
- Maple syrup producers must follow the Policy 3.4 – Labeling and Text Approval Policy. The Group Manager will provide an approved label, for a charge, to certified maple syrup producers that can be used on certified maple syrup.

EASTERN ONTARIO MODEL FOREST
INFORMATION REPORT NO 51 V. 3
December 2014
**FOREST CERTIFICATION POLICIES AND
PROCEDURES MANUAL
APPENDICES**

Appendix A – List of Agreements, Reporting Forms & Checklists

The Group Manager has developed a number of Agreements, Reporting Forms and Checklists covering the wide array of topics used by participants of the Forest Certification Program, including:

- Memoranda of Understanding for all the various relationships outlined in this Policy and Procedures Manual;
- Sample Timber Sale Agreement;
- Chain-of-Custody Certification Outsourcing Agreement;
- Forest Stand Analysis Form;
- Tree Marking Audit Report;
- Forest Operation Inspection Report;
- Community Forest Pre-harvest Inspection Form;
- Raptor Nest Form;
- Bill of Lading;
- Logging Damage Assessment; and

Copies of these templates are available from the Group Manager.

Appendix B – Guidelines for Small-Scale Harvesting (Personal Use)

- The objective of harvesting wood for personal use (non-commercial) and/or small-scale harvesting (firewood sale) should be part of your Forest Management Plan.
- Consider hiring a certified Ontario Tree Marker to mark your woodlot or section of your woodlot with the objective of providing wood for personal use
- Fuel wood or sawlogs under 15 bush cords/year for every 50 acres (54.3 cubic meters) is considered personal use and do not require a Forest Operations Prescription or the use of a Certified Tree Marker.
 - The volumes of wood harvested because of maintenance activities (ex. removing downed trees from trails, removing hazard trees) or routine storm cleanup do not contribute to the 15 bush cords/year limit (See Policy 2.2 – Major Natural Disturbance Salvage and Response Policy)
 - Only volumes deliberately harvested for personal use contribute
 - If the landowner's needs for personal use wood exceed this amount, the Group Manager should be contacted.
- All personal use harvesting must adhere to good forestry practices and certification standards
- Consider site conditions prior to harvesting i.e. it may be more appropriate to log when ground is frozen.
- For fuel wood, concentrate harvesting on Unacceptable Growing Stock trees not suitable for wildlife purposes.
- Group Manager will provide periodically – an “Introduction to Tree Marking” short course which will enable participating forest owners to mark their own fuel wood but this training would not be adequate for commercial harvest operations.
- Not all UGS trees should be removed
- Consider residual basal area, crown closure, variety of species, tree sizes.

Priority for removal;

- Diseased trees containing Nectria (Target canker), Eutypella (Cobra canker); Fomes rot, Hypoxylon fungus, armillaria, Beech Bark disease and Dutch Elm disease.
- Trees with insect borer wounds.
- Trees with low vigor.
- Trees with dark – faced wounds, trees with open frost cracks, trees with black bark (mold fungi).
- Trees with severe lean or sweep.

Glossary

Aboriginal peoples: as defined in the Constitution Act of 1982 Aboriginal Peoples include “Indians, Inuit and Métis”.

Aboriginal community: Any First Nations or Métis community (status or non-status) with a demonstrated traditional connection to the area in question.

Accreditation: The process of certifying the certifying bodies, to ensure credibility in issuing certificates.

Adaptive management: An approach to organizing management so that explicit hypotheses are tested as management activities proceed. A monitoring program tracks outcomes and, depending on how and why actual outcomes differ from expected outcomes, the management approach is reviewed and adjusted.

Area of Concern (AOC): Areas that require special consideration when planning forestry operations. AOCs typically require a modified forestry prescription.

Basal Area: The cross sectional area of a stem at breast height (1.3 m), most commonly accumulated as square meters per hectare.

Biological control agents: Living organisms used to eliminate or regulate the population of other living organisms.

Biological diversity: The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems. (see Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992).

Biological diversity values: The intrinsic, ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values of biological diversity and its components. (See Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992).

Biological control agents: Living organisms used to eliminate or regulate the population of other living organisms.

Buffer: A strip or area of vegetation that is left (often unharvested) or managed to reduce the impact of a treatment or action on neighbouring areas.

Certification: The voluntary process utilized to assess whether defined standards for environmental, social and economic values are met by a forest enterprise.

Certification system: A system that uses defined standards with third-party verification to evaluate forest management practices. A variety of programs or systems for certification is available through a range of organizations providing options with varying standards, costs and implementation procedures.

Certification Body: The third-party consultant, hired by the Certificate Holder and Certified by FSC International, to conduct audits to verify the compliance of the Certificate Holder with the appropriate FSC Standards.

Certificate Holder: The organization who has been issued an FSC Certificate by the Certification Body. In the case of the EOMF Certification Program, EOMF is the Certificate Holder.

Chain of custody: The channel through which products are distributed from their origin in the forest to their end-use.

Chain of Custody Certification: A system for tracking wood from a well-managed forest to the final product. It also provides a mechanism to measure the proportion of certified or recycled content in a product and provides assurance that uncertified materials come from legal and controlled sources.

Chemicals: The range of fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides and hormones which are used in forest management.

Clearcut: Any forest opening whose width or length is more than double the forest canopy height.

Community forest: A public forest area managed by the community as a working forest for the benefit of the community. Community forests include such examples as conservation authorities, county forests, municipal forests, MRC forests and les forêts habitées. Industrial licensed forests (SFL, CAAF) or forest partnerships in which control does not rest with the communities are not community forests.

Compaction: An increase in the bulk density (mass per unit volume) and a decrease in soil porosity resulting from applied loads, vibration or pressure. It is undesirable for plant growth since the compacted soil has insufficient pore space to allow effective diffusion of gases and liquids necessary to permit or maintain root development and nutrient uptake in plants.

Compliance: Adherence to laws, regulations, policies, or treaties of Canada, one of Canada's provinces or territories, regional jurisdictions and municipalities. Also used with respect to adherence to a forest management plan or operating plan.

Criterion (pl. Criteria): A means of judging whether or not a Principle (of Forest Management) has been fulfilled.

Crop Tree: Any tree forming or selected to form, a component of the final crop, specifically, one selected to be carried through to maturity.

Customary rights: Rights which result from a long series of habitual or customary actions, constantly repeated, which have, by such repetition and by uninterrupted acquiescence, acquired the force of a law within a geographical or sociological unit.

Disturbance: A disruption in the growth and development of an individual, population or community due to natural or anthropogenic factors such as herbivory, forest fires, road building, disease infestation, or tree harvesting.

Ecosystem: A community of all plants and animals and their physical environment, functioning together as an interdependent unit.

Element Occurrence: An area of land and / or water where a species or ecological community is or was present.

Endangered species: Any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Exotic species: An introduced species not native or endemic to the area in question.

First Nations: Generally used to refer to "Indians" as defined in the Canadian Constitution; see "Aboriginal."

Forest: An area managed for the production of timber and other forest products or maintained under woody vegetation for such indirect benefits as protection of site or recreation.

Forest integrity: The composition, dynamics, functions and structural attributes of a natural forest.

Forest management activities: Any or all of the operations, processes or procedures associated with managing a forest, including, but not limited to: planning, consultation, harvesting, access construction and maintenance, silvicultural activities (i.e., planting, site preparation, tending), monitoring, assessment and reporting.

Forest Management Certification: An assessment of the management of a forest against a suite of pre-determined standards, criteria or indicators of sustainability.

Forest management/manager: The people responsible for the operational management of the forest resource and of the enterprise, as well as the management system and structure, and the planning and field operations.

Forest product: A product made from wood or timber. The terms "forest product" and "non-timber forest product" are mutually exclusive.

Forest Product Certification: see Chain of Custody Certification.

Forest workers: All employees per the glossary's definition, as well as self-employed contractors, the employees of contractors or the employees other companies whose activities (e.g. planning, road-building, thinning, harvesting, hauling, etc) contribute directly to the delivery of wood to the manager that will be included in the scope of the FSC certificate.

Gap-analysis: An assessment of the protection status of biodiversity in a specified region which looks for gaps in the representation of species or ecosystems in protected areas.

Group Certification: Forest or Chain of Custody certification of multiple interests under a single certificate.

Indigenous lands and territories: The total environment of the lands, air, water, sea, sea-ice, flora and fauna and other resources which indigenous peoples have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. (Draft Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Part VI).

Indigenous peoples: "The existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them and, by conquest, settlement, or other means reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial situation; who today live more in conformity with their particular social, economic and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form a part, under State structure which incorporates mainly the national, social and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population which are predominant." (Working definition adopted by the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples).

Insecticide: Chemical or biological agent used to kill insects.

Integrated pest management (IPM): An ecological method of pest control that relies on a combination of operational approaches, including direct and indirect methods, to reduce damage to the forest rather than relying on direct spraying of pesticides to eliminate the pests. An important goal of IPM is to minimize environmental impacts of pest management activities. IPM techniques may include the use of natural predators and parasites, genetically resistant hosts, environmental modifications and when necessary and appropriate, chemical pesticides.

Landscape: A geographical mosaic composed of interacting ecosystems resulting from the influence of geological, topographical, soil, climatic, biotic and human interactions in a given area.

Landscape level: At a spatial scale above a single plant community or forest stand and below a region (See also definition of Landscape).

Local laws: Includes all legal norms given by organisms of government whose jurisdiction is less than the national level, such as departmental, municipal and customary norms.

Long term: The time-scale of the forest owner or manager as manifested by the objectives of the management plan, the rate of harvesting and the commitment to maintain permanent forest cover. The length of time involved will vary according to the context and ecological conditions and will be a function of how long it takes a given ecosystem to recover its natural structure and composition following harvesting or disturbance, or to produce mature or primary conditions.

Native species: A species that occurs naturally in the region; endemic to the area.

Natural cycles: Nutrient and mineral cycling as a result of interactions between soils, water, plants and animals in forest environments that affect the ecological productivity of a given site.

Natural forest: Forest areas where most of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems such as complexity, structure and diversity are present, as defined by FSC- approved national and regional standards of forest management.

Non-timber forest products: All forest products except timber, including other materials obtained from trees such as resins and leaves, as well as any other plant and animal products.

Old Growth: Old growth forest ecosystems are characterized by the presence of old trees and their associated plants, animals and ecological processes. They show little or no evidence of human disturbance.

Pest: Organisms which are harmful or perceived as harmful and as prejudicing the achievement of management goals or the desired yields or profit. Some pests, especially introduced exotics, may also pose serious ecological threats and suppression may be recommended. They include animal pests, plant weeds, pathogenic fungi and other micro-organisms.

Pesticide: Any substance, preparation or organism (including insecticides, herbicides and fungicides) prepared or used in protecting plants or wood or other plant products from harmful organisms; in rendering such organisms harmless; and controlling organisms with harmful or unwanted effects.

Plantation: Forest areas lacking most of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems as defined by FSC-approved national and regional standards of forest management, which result from the human activities of either planting, sowing or intensive silvicultural treatments.

Precautionary approach: An approach that tends to refrain from actions where the outcome is not known. In a forest management context it refers to situations in which a forest manager will often be required to act with incomplete knowledge of cause and effect relationships, and therefore a precautionary approach includes the following:

- The manager avoids actions that may lead to irreversible changes to ecosystem function and resilience;
- Alternative management strategies are developed and evaluated, including the alternative of no management intervention, to identify alternatives that are least likely to impair the viability of the species or ecosystem;
- The onus is on the manager to demonstrate that proposed management activities are not likely to impair ecosystem function and resilience;
- When previously unanticipated threats to ecosystem integrity are identified or knowledge of ecosystem processes increases, the manager takes timely, efficient and effective corrective actions; and,

- The manager remains mindful of the needs of future generations.

Primary forest: An ecosystem characterized by an abundance of mature trees, relatively undisturbed by human activity. Human impacts in such forest areas have normally been limited to low levels of hunting, fishing and harvesting of forest products and, in some cases, to low density, shifting agriculture with prolonged fallow periods. Such ecosystems are also referred to as "mature," "old-growth" or "virgin" forests.

Protected area: Areas that have some form of legal protection from industrial activity such as logging, mining, hydro-electric or oil and gas development.

Principle: An essential rule or element; in the FSC's case, of forest management.

Residual Forest: Residual forest is a forested patch that generally functions more as habitat for wildlife that inhabit older forest than as habitat for wildlife that inhabit younger forest. For a more specific definition of "residual forest" including quantitative requirements, please refer to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Forest Management Guide for Conserving Biodiversity at the Stand and Site Scales.

Restoration: A process of returning ecosystems or habitats to their original structure and species composition. Restoration requires a detailed knowledge of the (original) species, ecosystem functions and interacting processes involved.

Restoration Forestry: Assisting natural processes to re-establish forest composition and structures necessary to re-establish fully functioning forests at all scales.

Riparian area: 1. The area related to the bank or shore of a water body. 2. The area of forest having qualities influenced by proximity to a water body.

Silviculture: The science and art of producing and tending a forest by manipulating its establishment, composition and growth to best fulfill the objectives of the owner. This may, or may not, include timber production.

Site preparation: the disturbance of the forest floor and topsoil to create suitable conditions for artificial or natural regeneration.

Snag: a standing dead tree or a standing section of a tree stem.

Species at risk (SAR): Species that are listed as "at risk" (i.e. those which have some special designation related to concerns for their population or habitat status) by federal or provincial government agencies.

Stand: A community of trees occupying a specific area and uniform enough in composition (species), age and arrangement to be distinguishable from the adjoining areas.

Standard: the criteria defined by a certifying body that outlines the minimum requirements for management that must be implemented by a forest enterprise.

Standard operating procedure: a standardized and codified manner of conducting a particular management operation or activity. Within the practice of forest management, standard operating procedures may exist for such operations as road construction, culvert installation, chain-saw use, skidder operations, aerial application of herbicides, etc.

Succession: Progressive changes in species composition and forest community structure caused by natural processes (nonhuman) over time.

Sustainable Forest Management: Forest management that maintains and enhances the long-term health of forest ecosystems while providing environmental, economic, social and cultural opportunities for present and future generations.

Tenure: Socially defined agreements held by individuals or groups, recognized by legal statutes or customary practice, regarding the "bundle of rights and duties" of ownership, holding, access and/or usage of a particular land unit or the associated resources there within (such as individual trees, plant species, water, minerals, etc.).

Third-party Audit: An independent assessment where an impartial auditor conducts an evaluation based on defined criteria.

Threatened species: Any species which is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Use rights: Rights for the use of forest resources that can be defined by local custom, mutual agreements, or prescribed by other entities holding access rights. These rights may restrict the use of particular resources to specific levels of consumption or particular harvesting techniques.

Value: A feature that receives special attention in planning and implementing a forestry prescription. Values can be natural heritage or cultural heritage features.

Watershed: An area of land through which water drains into other streams or waterways via underground or surface streams and rivers.

Wetland: lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is at or near the surface, or the land is covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season. Wetlands are characterized by poorly drained soils and predominantly hydrophytic or water tolerant vegetation.

Wildlife: any species of amphibian, bird, fish, mammal, reptile, or plant found in the wild, living unrestrained or free-roaming and not domesticated.