

FSC Forest Management Audit

Public Summary Report

Audit Conducted By	SCS Global Services 2000 Powell Street Emeryville CA 94608 United State of America www.scsglobalservices.com
Contact Person	Brendan Grady
Report last updated on	02 October 2025
Certificate Holder	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, MFL W5327 Granberg Road Prentice WI 54556 USA https://dnr.wisconsin.gov
Contact Person	Jake Walcisak
Certified Forest Areas	2,362,323 acres
FSC certificate registration code	SCS-FM/COC-004622
Certificate issue date	30 November 2023
Certificate expiry date	29 November 2028
Audit Sequence	2nd

This forest has been certified by SCS Global Services as meeting the requirements of FSC national forest standard U.S Forest Management v1.0.

Certificate Holder and Certification Body Details

Question	Inputs
Certificate Holder	
1.01 Certificate holder name *	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, MFL
1.01.1 Local company name	
1.01.2 Trading name	
1.02.1 Street Address *	W5327 Granberg Road
1.02.2 Address Line 2	
1.02.3 City *	Prentice
1.02.4 State or Province	WI
1.02.5 Postal Code	54556
1.03 Country *	USA
1.04 Contact person full name *	Jake Walcisak
1.05 Email *	Jacob.Walcisak@wisconsin.gov
1.06 Telephone *	715-657-5812
1.07 Website *	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov
Certificate Parameters	
1.08 FSC licence code *	FSC-C117792
1.09 Certificate code *	SCS-FM/COC-004622
1.10 Former certificate code (if any)	
1.11 Certificate type *	FM/COC
1.12 Group certificate *	Yes
1.13.1 Initial certification date *	2013-08-12
1.13.2 Most recent certification date *	2023-11-30
1.13.3 Certificate expiry date *	2028-11-29
1.14 Total number of MUs in the scope of certificate *	1
1.15 Total area certified *	955 998.0 ha
1.16 Certificate scope	
1.16.2 Current certificate scope *	Eligible MFL enrollments voluntarily participating in the MFL Certified Group. Currently 40,668 Mus.
1.16.3 Change of scope since previous audit *	Yes
1.16.1 Nature of scope change	number of group members has changed
1.17 Ecosystem services in scope *	No
1.26 Continuous Improvement Procedure being followed *	No
1.28 Regulatory Module in scope *	No
1.25 Name and/or location of the certified forest area(s)	
1.27 Changes to database details	

Question	Inputs
Certification Body	
1.18 Certification body name *	SCS Global Services
1.19.1 Street Address *	2000 Powell Street
1.19.2 Address Line 2	
1.19.3 City *	Emeryville
1.19.4 State	CA
1.19.5 Postal Code	94608
1.20 Country *	United State of America
1.21 Contact person full name *	Brendan Grady
1.22 Email *	bgrady@scsglobalservices.com
1.23 Telephone *	+1 510. 452.8000
1.24 Website *	www.scsglobalservices.com

The evaluation process

Question	Inputs
Audit Parameters	
2.01 Audit type *	Surveillance
2.01.1 Audit sequence *	2nd
2.01.2 Audit location *	On-site
2.01.3 Justification for remote audit	
2.01.4 Methods used for remote audit	
2.02 Audit start date *	2025-08-18
2.16 First stakeholder consultation date for this audit	2025-07-07
2.03 Audit finish date *	2025-08-22
2.04 Total person days on-site *	15.0
2.04.1 Justification for audit time *	Days need to visit the selected MUs
2.05 Date of report *	2025-10-02
Normative Documents	
2.07 Evaluated international normative document(s) *	
2.07.1 Trademark standard FSC-STD-50-001 *	Yes
2.07.2 Group standard FSC-STD-30-005 *	Yes
2.07.3 CoC standard FSC-STD-40-004 *	No
2.07.4 ES procedure FSC-PRO-30-006 *	No
2.07.5 Exclusion Policy FSC-POL-20-003 *	Yes
2.07.6 Pesticides Policy FSC-POL-30-001 *	Yes
2.07.7 Applicable NTFP Standard *	Yes
2.07.8 CIP FSC PRO 30-011 *	No
2.08 Code(s) of NFSS or IFSS used *	U.S Forest Management v1.0
2.09 Web link to the standard used *	FSC Connect
2.10 If applicable, the adaptation process of CB interim standard	NA

The evaluation process

Question	Inputs
Certification Decision	
2.20 Conditions associated with the certification decision *	
2.20.1 No specific condition *	Yes
2.20.2 Correction of minor NCRs issued within required timelines *	NA
2.20.3 Correction of major NCRs issued within required timelines *	NA
2.20.4 Correction of the pre-conditions to certification identified *	NA
2.20.5 Other	
2.32 Conditions assessed and subsequent actions taken prior to the certification decision to correct major or minor non-conformities that were identified *	NA
2.22 Auditor's recommendation *	
2.22.1 The organization is in conformity with the certification requirements *	Yes
2.22.2 The organization needs to take corrective actions *	NA
2.28 Resolution of alleged non-conformities	
2.29 Potential infringements of the FSC Policy for Association *	Unknown
2.24 Other details relevant to the decision	
2.23 Certification decision *	Maintain
2.25 Decision date *	2025-10-02
2.26 Decision making entity *	SCS Global Services



Audit itinerary

4.01 Audit Itinerary Item Start Date *	4.02 Hours *	4.03 MUs or members *	4.04 Activities *	4.05 Site detail *
		3.00 WI DNR	Opening Meeting: Introductions, client update, review audit scope, review and approve audit plan, intro/update to applicable Forest Management standards, SCS standards, confidentiality and public summary, conformance evaluation methods and tools, review of open CARs/OBS, emergency and security procedures for audit team, and final site selection adjustments. Review prior year findings. review any ongoing issues and/or stakeholder concerns.	DNR Spooner Service Center
2025-08-19	8.00 WI DNR		Conducted review of cutting notice and harvest documentation. Assessed adherence to mandatory practices and interviewed stakeholders on-site. Reviewed cutting notice and discussed management goals; verified site boundaries and assessed compliance with mandatory practices. Conducted interviews with field staff. Inspected cutting report and evaluated forest management objectives	Orders Visited: 58-004-2019, 58-016-2013, 58-005-2016, 58-001-2006, 02-307-1999, 02-257-1999, 02-024-2004, 02-006-2001, 03-021-2022, 03-012-2016, 03-059-2003, 03-008-2006, 03-013-2015, 49-035-2007, 49-072-2003, 06-042-2010, 06-146-2003, 06-003-2014, 06-156-2007, 06-062-2004, 06-005-2009
2025-08-20	8.00 WI DNR		Assessed adherence to mandatory practices and interviewed stakeholders on-site. Inspected cutting report and evaluated forest management objectives. Checked boundary markers and spoke with management staff and forester. Checked cutting notice and reviewed objectives. Evaluated site compliance and held discussions with foresters and management staff. Verified cutting notice details,	Orders Visited: 66-008-2014, 66-009-2008, 66-029-2013, 66-013-2005, 66-074-2004, 07-001-1996, 07-015-2008, 03-019-2012, 03-013-2013, 17-007-2013, 17-006-2017, 17-011-2017, 17-020-2003, 17-004-2010, 62-027-2007, 62-008-2012, 62-010-2013, 62-006-2023, 62-011-2015, 62-007-2011, 62-001-2018
2025-08-21	8.00 WI DNR		Reviewed cutting notice and discussed management goals; verified site boundaries and assessed compliance with mandatory practices. Conducted interviews with field staff. Inspected cutting report and evaluated forest management objectives. Checked boundary markers and spoke with management staff and forester. Checked cutting notice and reviewed objectives.	Orders Visited: 04-318-1999, 16-001-2018, 16-003-2018, 16-002-2018, 16-257-1999, 16-002-2015, 56-007-1995, 56-011-2004, 48-015-2003, 48-026-2012, 48-021-2004, 47-031-2002, 09-045-2004, 09-221-1999, 09-223-1999, 09-016-2012, 18-002-2021, 18-023-2004
2025-08-22	4.00 WI DNR		Closing meeting preparation. Audit team takes time to consolidate notes and review audit findings for presentation at closing meeting. Closing Meeting: Convene with all relevant staff to give a brief summary of audit activities, FSC present preliminary findings, ATFS review identified nonconformities, confidentiality, SCS/FSC/ATFS dispute policy, timeline for reports.	DNR Spooner Service Center

Forest management enterprise information

Question

Inputs

Environmental Values

Forest management enterprise information

Question	Inputs
Group Management	
5.27 Total number of group members *	1
5.28 Group members located in more than one country	
5.29 Maximum manageable number of group members *	99999
5.29.1 Other relevant criteria to group size where applicable	
5.30 Number of members sampled annually by group entity *	40
5.33 Division of responsibilities with entities included into the scope of certification *	
5.33.1 Management planning *	Joint Responsibility
5.33.2 Forest protection *	Group Member
5.33.3 Silviculture *	Joint Responsibility
5.33.4 Harvesting *	Group Member
5.33.5 Sales & marketing *	Group Member
5.33.6 Use of trademark *	Joint Responsibility
5.33.7 Stakeholder engagement *	Joint Responsibility
5.33.8 Training *	Joint Responsibility
5.33.9 Ecosystem services impacts	
5.34 Explanation of responsibilities of group entity, members and contractors, and evidence that these are fulfilled *	<p>The Forest Tax Law Section (TLS) of the WI DNR administers the MFL program under which the MFL Certified Group is offered for voluntary participation by eligible MFL landowners. MFL landowners (Group Members) are responsible for fulfilling the requirements of the MFL program including a management plan, forest protection, harvest practices consistent with sound forestry and/or WI silviculture guidelines and their management objectives and landowner goals and including sale or marketing of their timber, and conformance with FSC trademark policy. Landowners hire a consulting forester to write a management plan and typically hire a forester or logger to assist with harvesting. Through administration of the program, Tax Law Forestry Specialists collaborate with landowners, foresters, and loggers on management planning, harvesting, and silviculture. The TLS trains internal staff and collaborates with other entities/programs such as the Cooperating Forester Program, Forest Industry Safety and Training Alliance (FISTA), and UW Extension to offer training on forestry and certification topics to landowners, foresters, and loggers. The DNR forest certification coordinator is responsible to ensure trademark/logo use in accordance with FSC policy. Stakeholder engagement may vary depending on the scale and stakeholder where a landowner may address property specific concerns or the TLS could be involved at any scale and also coordinates large scale outreach efforts.</p>

Group members

6.01 Group member name *	6.05 Sub-code (if applicable)	6.10 Date Joined *	6.11 Date Left	6.12 Contractor *	6.06 Certified area *

Management Units

											Area Units: ha		
7.01 MU name *	7.23 Cadastral Identifier	7.02 Forest zone *	7.03 SLIMF type *	7.04 Tenure-ownership *	7.05 Tenure-management *	7.24 Recognised as Community Forest	7.25 SLIMF or Community	7.06 Centroid Latitude *	7.07 Centroid Longitude *	7.08 Total production forest area *	7.09 Total non-production forest area *	7.10 Total area of MU *	7.20 Group Member Managing *
Number of Valid Entries:		1						Area Totals		881,088.29	74,909.74	955,998.03	
Wisconsin Department of Natural Re													
		Temperate	Both SLIMF Types	Private	Private	No	Yes			881,088.29	74,909.74	955,998.03	

Commercial timber species

8.01 Species *	8.02 Product code *	8.03 Trade name *	8.04 Harvested quantity in previous calendar year *	8.06 Sold with FSC Claim in previous calendar year *
Abies balsamea	W1 Rough wood	Balsam fir	19 677.3 m3	19 677.3 m3
Acer negundo L.	W1 Rough wood	Box elder	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Acer platanoides	W1 Rough wood	Norway maple	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Acer rubrum	W1 Rough wood	Red maple	36 221.6 m3	36 221.6 m3
Acer saccharinum	W1 Rough wood	Silver maple	263.4 m3	263.4 m3
Acer saccharum L	W1 Rough wood	Sugar maple	55 562.7 m3	55 562.7 m3
Acer spp.	W1 Rough wood	Maple	266.8 m3	266.8 m3
Betula alleghaniensis	W1 Rough wood	Yellow birch	299.3 m3	299.3 m3
Betula nigra	W1 Rough wood	River birch	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Betula papyrifera	W1 Rough wood	White birch	1 817.1 m3	1 817.1 m3
Carpinus caroliniana	W1 Rough wood	Musclewood	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Carya cordiformis	W1 Rough wood	Bitternut hickory	1 876.4 m3	1 876.4 m3
Carya ovata	W1 Rough wood	Shagbark hickory	761.2 m3	761.2 m3
Celtis occidentalis	W1 Rough wood	Hackberry	13.5 m3	13.5 m3
Fagus grandifolia	W1 Rough wood	Beech	165.5 m3	165.5 m3
Fraxinus americana	W1 Rough wood	White ash	4 618.1 m3	4 618.1 m3
Fraxinus nigra Marsh.	W1 Rough wood	Black ash	2 508.4 m3	2 508.4 m3
Fraxinus pennsylvanica	W1 Rough wood	Green ash	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Fraxinus spp.	W1 Rough wood	Ash	39 046.2 m3	39 046.2 m3
Gleditsia triacanthos	W1 Rough wood	Honey locust	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Juglans cinerea	W1 Rough wood	Butternut	18.1 m3	18.1 m3
Juglans nigra L.	W1 Rough wood	Black walnut	4 585.8 m3	4 585.8 m3
Juniperus virginiana	W1 Rough wood	Eastern red cedar	0.0 m3	0.0 m3

Commercial timber species

8.01 Species *	8.02 Product code *	8.03 Trade name *	8.04 Harvested quantity in previous calendar year *	8.06 Sold with FSC Claim in previous calendar year *
Larix decidua	W1 Rough wood	European larch	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Larix laricina	W1 Rough wood	Tamarack	4 373.1 m3	4 373.1 m3
Ostrya virginiana	W1 Rough wood	Ironwood	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Picea abies	W1 Rough wood	Norway spruce	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Picea glauca	W1 Rough wood	White spruce	2 593.0 m3	2 593.0 m3
Picea mariana	W1 Rough wood	Black spruce	898.9 m3	898.9 m3
Picea pungens Engelm.	W1 Rough wood	Blue spruce	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Picea spp.	W1 Rough wood	Spruce	19 226.6 m3	19 226.6 m3
Pinus banksiana	W1 Rough wood	Jack pine	11 178.0 m3	11 178.0 m3
Pinus nigra	W1 Rough wood	Austrian pine	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Pinus resinosa	W1 Rough wood	Red pine	343 259.8 m3	343 259.8 m3
Pinus strobus	W1 Rough wood	White pine	60 559.7 m3	60 559.7 m3
Pinus sylvestris	W1 Rough wood	Scotch pine	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Populus balsamifera	W1 Rough wood	Balsam poplar	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Populus deltoides	W1 Rough wood	Cottonwood	23.9 m3	23.9 m3
Populus grandidentata	W1 Rough wood	Big-tooth aspen	9.6 m3	9.6 m3
Populus spp.	W1 Rough wood	Aspen	342 642.1 m3	342 642.1 m3
Populus tremuloides	W1 Rough wood	Quaking aspen	79.0 m3	79.0 m3
Prunus serotina Ehrh.	W1 Rough wood	Black cherry	2 243.8 m3	2 243.8 m3
Quercus alba	W1 Rough wood	White oak	14 416.3 m3	14 416.3 m3
Quercus bicolor	W1 Rough wood	Swamp white oak	44.9 m3	44.9 m3
Quercus ellipsoidalis	W1 Rough wood	Northern pin oak	3 903.0 m3	3 903.0 m3
Quercus macrocarpa	W1 Rough wood	Bur oak	8.0 m3	8.0 m3
Quercus rubra	W1 Rough wood	Red oak	163 563.0 m3	163 563.0 m3

Commercial timber species

8.01 Species *	8.02 Product code *	8.03 Trade name *	8.04 Harvested quantity in previous calendar year *	8.06 Sold with FSC Claim in previous calendar year *
Quercus spp	W1 Rough wood	Oak	62 523.8 m3	62 523.8 m3
Quercus velutina	W1 Rough wood	Black oak	38 902.2 m3	38 902.2 m3
Robinia pseudoacacia L.	W1 Rough wood	Black locust	171.0 m3	171.0 m3
Thuja occidentalis	W1 Rough wood	White cedar	1 193.1 m3	1 193.1 m3
Tilia americana L	W1 Rough wood	Basswood	59 349.3 m3	59 349.3 m3
Tsuga canadensis (L.) Carr.	W1 Rough wood	Hemlock	3 391.6 m3	3 391.6 m3
Ulmus americana L. (Syn.: Ulmus americana var. americana).	W1 Rough wood	American elm	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Ulmus rubra	W1 Rough wood	Red elm	0.0 m3	0.0 m3
Ulmus spp.	W1 Rough wood	Elm	573.1 m3	573.1 m3
Quercus rubra	W1 Rough wood	Mixed species	21 744.5 m3	21 744.5 m3
Populus spp.	W1 Rough wood	Mixed hardwoods	782 661.6 m3	782 661.6 m3

Pesticide use since previous audit/year

10.01.1 Trade name *	10.01 Active ingredient *	10.03 Applied area *	10.04 Reason for use *	10.04.1 Location used *	10.04.2 Period of use *	10.04.3 Number of applications *	10.04.4 Frequency of application *	10.05 Quantity of ingredient *	10.06 Summary of ESRA
Garlon	trichlopyr	111.7 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	233.5 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Element	trichlopyr	108.9 ha	Invasive species control, site prep, release	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	91.2 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Crossbow	trichlopyr	15.4 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	0.5 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Alligare	trichlopyr	4.9 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	34.1 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Unspecified	trichlopyr	0.4 ha	Release	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	2.1 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Gordon's Brushkiller	trichlopyr	0.8 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	0.2 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Bio Advanced Brush Kill Plus	trichlopyr	10.1 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	1.2 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Roundup	glyphosate	55.0 ha	Invasive species control, site prep	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	46.9 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Makaze	glyphosate	19.8 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	1.3 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Compare N Save weed killer	glyphosate	4.0 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	1.5 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Bullzeye	glyphosate	0.8 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	0.2 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Cornerstone	glyphosate	2.0 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	7.6 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Accord XRT 11	glyphosate	1.2 ha	Site prep	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	3.8 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Aquaneat	glyphosate	0.4 ha	Site prep	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	0.2 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
41% glyphosate	glyphosate	15.8 ha	Invasive species control, release	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	3.1 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Milestone	aminopyralid	38.4 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	1.3 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Escort	metasulfuron	2.4 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	0.0 metric tonnes	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Oust	sulfometuron	1.2 ha	Site prep	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	2.1 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Crossbow	2,4-D	15.4 ha	Site prep	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	0.5 litres	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides
Cellutreat	Borax, disodium octaborate tetrahydrate	26.3 ha	Invasive species control	Certified MFL property	2024-2025	1	As needed	0.0 metric tonnes	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestandowners/mfl/pesticides

Forest context and management plan

Question	Inputs
11.28 Description of the forest	Wisconsin's forests managed under the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program promote sustainable forestry across nearly 2.4 million acres. These forests are ecologically diverse and serve multiple purposes including timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and recreation. Ownership is fragmented, with over 32,000 private forest owners, most holding small parcels. Forest composition and management are guided by state-issued silvicultural and aesthetic handbooks, ensuring practices align with ecological and economic goals. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) oversees environmental safeguards and monitoring systems to maintain forest health and biodiversity.
11.29 Description of the management system	The forest management system in Wisconsin operates under the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program, which incentivizes sustainable forestry on private lands through reduced property taxes. Management is guided by certified forest management plans that align with landowner objectives and state forestry standards. These plans are developed by certified plan writers and include provisions for timber harvesting, wildlife habitat, water quality, and recreational use. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administers the program through its Division of Forestry, with a structured team of specialists and field teams responsible for oversight, compliance, and technical support. The system emphasizes legal compliance, ecological sustainability, and economic viability.
11.01 Legislative, administrative and land use context in which the Organization operates	The organization operates under a robust framework of federal, state, and local regulations that govern forest management activities. At the national level, legislation such as the Clean Water Act (Section 404), the Endangered Species Act, and various preservation acts—including the National Historic Preservation Act and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act—provide foundational legal protections. Additionally, U.S.-ratified treaties like CITES and laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act contribute to the regulatory landscape. At the state level, Wisconsin enforces a comprehensive set of statutes and administrative codes, including Chapter 26 for forest land protection, Chapter 94 for pesticide regulation, and Chapter NR 103 for wetland water quality standards. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) plays a central role in implementing these laws through manuals, handbooks, and planning templates. Land use is further shaped by the Managed Forest Law (MFL), which incentivizes sustainable forestry practices on private lands. This program requires landowners to adhere to approved management plans and promotes responsible stewardship that balances timber production with ecological conservation and public access.
11.02 Roles of responsible government agencies involved in aspects of forest management	The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) serves as the primary regulatory authority overseeing forest management within the state. It administers the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program through its Division of Forestry, specifically the Tax Law Section. This section includes a range of specialized roles such as Tax Law Compliance Specialists, Section Chiefs, Operations Specialists, Administration Coordinators, Forestry Specialists (Foresters), and Administrative Specialists. These roles are organized into geographically based Tax Law Field Teams—Northwest, South, Northeast, and North Central—each led by a Field Team Leader. These teams are responsible for ensuring compliance with forest management plans, monitoring practices, and implementing environmental safeguards. Additionally, cooperating foresters certified by the DNR play a critical role in writing management plans and conducting field assessments, ensuring that private forest lands are managed sustainably and in accordance with state regulations.
11.03 Ownership and use-rights (both legal and customary) of lands and forest of external parties other than the certificate holder	In Wisconsin, forest ownership is diverse and includes a range of external parties beyond the certificate holder. Of the nearly 17 million acres of forested land in the state, individual private owners hold the majority—approximately 56%. Public ownership accounts for a significant portion as well, with counties and municipalities owning about 15%, the state 7%, and the federal government 10%. Other external parties include private corporations and organizations (6%), forest industry entities (4%), and tribal lands (2%). These ownership structures reflect both legal and customary use-rights, with tribal lands governed by sovereign tribal authorities and public lands managed by various government agencies. The Managed Forest Law (MFL) program allows private landowners to enroll their forested lands under specific conditions, promoting sustainable forestry while maintaining legal use-rights. Customary rights, particularly among tribal communities, are respected through government-to-government relationships and recognition of traditional land stewardship practices.
11.04 Non-forestry activities being undertaken within the area evaluated, whether they are undertaken by the certificate holder or by some other party (e.g. mining, industrial operations, agriculture, hunting, commercial tourism, etc.)	
11.04.1 mining	No
11.04.2 industrial operation	No
11.04.3 agriculture	No
11.04.4 hunting	Yes
11.04.6 other, please specify	

Forest context and management plan

Question	Inputs
11.05 Forest management objectives	<p>The forest management objectives under Wisconsin's Managed Forest Law (MFL) program are centered on promoting sustainable forestry practices on privately owned woodlands. The program incentivizes landowners to manage their forests responsibly by offering reduced property taxes in exchange for adherence to sound forest management principles. These objectives include the production of future forest crops for commercial use, protection of watersheds, development of wildlife habitat, and ensuring recreational accessibility of private lands to the public. Each enrolled property must follow a management plan tailored to the landowner's goals, which is written by a certified plan writer. These plans address timber harvesting, wildlife conservation, and water quality, aligning individual landowner interests with broader environmental and economic sustainability goals.</p>
11.06 Land use and ownership status of the forest resource	<p>Wisconsin's forest resources are characterized by a diverse ownership structure and evolving land use patterns. Of the nearly 17 million acres of forested land in the state, individual private owners hold the majority share at 56%. Public ownership includes counties and municipalities (15%), the state (7%), and the federal government (10%). Other ownership categories include private corporations and organizations (6%), forest industry (4%), and tribal lands (2%). Over the past four decades, the number of private forest owners has doubled to approximately 270,000, with an average parcel size of just over 30 acres in southern Wisconsin. Nearly 20% of forest landowners acquired their property within the last seven years, reflecting a dynamic shift in land tenure. The Managed Forest Law (MFL) program plays a key role in shaping land use by allowing eligible private landowners to enroll their forested parcels under specific conditions, promoting sustainable forestry while maintaining accessibility and ecological integrity.</p>
11.07 Socio-economic conditions of the forest management	<p>Forest management in Wisconsin is deeply influenced by the state's socio-economic landscape. With a population of nearly 5.8 million, Wisconsin boasts a high educational attainment rate—over 91% have a high school diploma and more than 28% hold a bachelor's degree or higher. The median household income is approximately \$54,610, and about 11.8% of residents live below the poverty line. Forestry is a vital economic sector in the state, ranking among the top ten industries by employment and output. It contributes 1.8% of jobs and 4% of total economic output, with every forestry job supporting an additional 1.7 jobs in other sectors. Wisconsin leads the nation in paper production, and forest product exports total \$2.2 billion annually. The forest industry's economic impact is assessed using IMPLAN modeling, which highlights its significance to local economies. Additionally, Wisconsin is home to 11 federally recognized tribes, whose cultural and economic ties to forest lands are acknowledged through government-to-government relationships and traditional land use practices.</p>
11.08 Brief description of forest composition	<p>Forest composition in Wisconsin is shaped by ecological conditions and guided by silvicultural principles outlined in the Forestry Silviculture and Aesthetics Handbook. The forests consist of a variety of native tree species selected based on site-specific factors such as soil type, climate, and landowner objectives. These species are managed to support sustainable timber production, wildlife habitat, and aesthetic values. The Managed Forest Law (MFL) program requires that at least 80% of enrolled parcels be covered by forest capable of growing commercial timber, ensuring that forest composition remains productive and ecologically balanced. Management plans are tailored to each property, promoting species diversity and long-term forest health.</p>
11.09 Profile of adjacent lands	
11.09.1 urban	No
11.09.2 agriculture	Yes
11.09.3 wetland	Yes
11.09.4 mining	No
11.09.5 desert	No
11.09.6 pasture	Yes
11.09.7 orchards	Yes
11.09.8 other, please specify	

Forest context and management plan

Question	Inputs
11.23.1 Description of segregation controls implemented *	MFL management plans contain language requireing certified material be segregated from non certified material. See OBS 2025.1 regarding documentation of segregated material.
11.27.1 log yard *	Yes
11.27.2 road side *	Yes
11.27.3 other, please specify	

Forest context and management plan

Question	Inputs
11.31 Major changes to management plan *	None

Stakeholder feedback

12.01 Stakeholder group	12.02 Stakeholder description	12.03 Stakeholder's comment	12.06 CB's follow up
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Nonconformities/Observations raised

14.01 Unique Finding number *	14.06 Grading *	14.07 Open / Closed *	14.08 Standard *	14.09 Clause *	14.03 Issue date *	14.04 Due date *	14.05 Close date *	14.10 Requirement *	14.11 Description of audit finding *	14.15 Corrective action requested *	14.14 MU Applicability	14.12 Corrective action taken by the auditee *	14.13 CB's review of corrective actions
2025-C117792-1	Obs	Open	NFSS	8.3.b	2025-08-22			The forest owner or manager maintains documentation to enable the tracing of the harvested material from each harvested product from its origin to the point of sale.	Local certified timber sales may cross ownership boundaries where physical segregation from non-certified material may become necessary. No sales with this occurrence were visited during the audit and therefore no documentation of non-certified material was reviewed. Retention of non-certified volume information adds additional evidence of conformance with chain of custody segregation requirements.	NA			

Principles & Criteria Summary

18.01 Standard Requirement	18.02 Num CARs	18.03 Summary Assessment
Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.	0	
Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements.	0	All MFL properties inspected during the 2025 audit were found to be in full conformance with applicable standards. Legislative updates, including those from the 2020 NR 46 Administrative Rule Changes, are documented in the Forest Tax Law Handbook and supported by evidence such as cutting notices, stewardship plans, and timber sale contracts. The Wisconsin DNR ensures compliance through structured training programs for foresters and plan writers, with resources and updates shared via the CPW Collaboration SharePoint Site.
All applicable and legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges shall be paid.	0	DNR confirms by examining landowner production reports. Managed Forest Law and Forest Crop Law Cutting Notice and Report of Wood Products (Form 2450-032) are legislatively required. Register deeds notifies DNR of delinquent taxes, MFL advises landowner of any delinquency.
In signatory countries, the provisions of all binding international agreements such as CITES, ILO Conventions, ITTA, and Convention on Biological Diversity, shall be respected.	0	No evidence indicating non-compliance was discovered during the audit. This has been determined to be a low risk of negative social or environmental impact due to U.S. Federal Law requirements covering most of Criterion 1.3.
Conflicts between laws, regulations and the FSC Principles and Criteria shall be evaluated for the purposes of certification, on a case by case basis, by the certifiers and the involved or affected parties.	0	No conflict between laws, regulations, and the FSC P&C were identified. Responsible DNR staff confirmed in interview knowledge of requirement to notify CB should such a conflict arise.
Forest management areas should be protected from illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorized activities.	0	Landowners actively monitor their properties to prevent unauthorized activities such as timber theft, trash dumping, and trespassing, and they seek professional assistance when boundary issues arise. The 2025 audit found no evidence of illegal activities, with all properties showing adequate boundary marking and landowners reporting minimal concerns, often resolved through local law enforcement. Training opportunities provided by the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association and DNR—including safety, first aid, and health education—support landowners in maintaining secure and well-managed forest areas.
Forest managers shall demonstrate a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria.	0	Forest Tax Law Handbook documents commitment to the FSC Principles and Criteria (Chapter 221).
	0	
	0	
Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.	0	
Clear evidence of long-term forest use rights to the land (e.g. land title, customary rights, or lease agreements) shall be demonstrated.	0	Long-term forest use rights for MFL properties are clearly documented through deeds, titles, and eligibility criteria outlined in the Forest Tax Law Handbook. Open properties are legally required to provide public access for recreation, and other use rights—such as utility rights-of-way and designated trails—are acknowledged without affecting program eligibility. All inspected properties showed systematic boundary marking, with maps maintained in each file, and landowners are responsible for identifying and maintaining boundaries prior to management activities.

Principles & Criteria Summary

18.01 Standard Requirement	18.02 Num CARs	18.03 Summary Assessment
Local communities with legal or customary tenure or use rights shall maintain control, to the extent necessary to protect their rights or resources, over forest operations unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.	0	Properties classified as Open to public recreation are properly documented through the WisFRS system and an online mapping tool maintained by the Wisconsin DNR. Timber harvesting activities are generally compatible with public hunting access, as most harvests occur outside of hunting seasons and often enhance habitat conditions for game species like deer and turkey. This alignment supports both forest management objectives and recreational use.
Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed to resolve disputes over tenure claims and use rights. The circumstances and status of any outstanding disputes will be explicitly considered in the certification evaluation. Disputes of substantial magnitude involving a significant number of interests will normally disqualify an operation from being certified.	0	The group manager typically does not intervene in disputes over tenure or use rights unless enforcement issues arise, such as unreported land sales or inaccurate acreage reporting, which are monitored through annual tax record reviews. During the audit, several examples were observed where landowners and consulting foresters proactively maintained clear property boundaries—often using gates and markers—to prevent potential conflicts. No disputes were reported by group members or foresters during interviews, indicating a low risk of conflict and strong boundary management practices.
	0	
	0	
	0	
The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.	0	
Indigenous peoples shall control forest management on their lands and territories unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.	0	NA
Forest management shall not threaten or diminish, either directly or indirectly, the resources or tenure rights of indigenous peoples.	0	Tribes retain hunting and fishing rights on MFL lands open to public access, with extended rights in Wisconsin's ceded territories. The audit confirmed that tribal concerns primarily focus on protecting archaeological sites and maintaining access to traditional resources, and that appropriate steps are taken to safeguard sensitive areas once identified. The Wisconsin DNR consults with federally recognized Chippewa tribes through designated liaisons and collaborates with the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission on forestry protocols, while Cutting Notices include reviews of tribal resource databases and staff are trained in archaeological site identification.
Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to indigenous peoples shall be clearly identified in cooperation with such peoples, and recognized and protected by forest managers.	0	Field visits confirmed that sensitive cultural and historical sites are appropriately identified and protected during forest management activities. The Wisconsin DNR consults archaeological databases for each cutting notice to ensure historic and archaeological resources are considered, and both MFL staff and certified plan writers demonstrated awareness of proper procedures. Additionally, DNR tribal liaisons work with tribal representatives and state archaeologists to develop and implement protection strategies for areas of cultural significance.
Indigenous peoples shall be compensated for the application of their traditional knowledge regarding the use of forest species or management systems in forest operations. This compensation shall be formally agreed upon with their free and informed consent before forest operations	0	NA WI DNR is not aware of any use of protected traditional knowledge being used in their forest management. Confirmed via field observation that no traditional knowledge is used in forest management. This criteria and associated indicators is not applicable.

Principles & Criteria Summary

18.01 Standard Requirement	18.02 Num CARs	18.03 Summary Assessment
	0	
	0	
Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.	0	
The communities within, or adjacent to, the forest management area should be given opportunities for employment, training, and other services.	0	Most service providers involved in the MFL program, including loggers and certified plan writers, are self-employed and report compensation that meets or exceeds local industry standards, while DNR employees receive competitive state benefits. Training opportunities tailored to the MFL program are available for service providers, and flexible work arrangements—such as mobile technology and telecommuting—support operational efficiency. The program demonstrates low risk of negative social impact, contributes significantly to Wisconsin’s economy, and supports local communities through timber production and recreational access.
Forest management should meet or exceed all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families.	0	This indicator remains low risk for negative impacts, with the Wisconsin DNR providing clear guidance on health and safety through resources like the Timber Sale Handbook and Private Forestry Handbook. DNR staff are equipped with required safety gear and benefit from reliable transportation for fieldwork, while loggers and service providers receive extensive training through DNR-led and industry-supported programs such as FISTA. Field audits confirmed safe practices, well-trained personnel, and contract language that supports safety compliance, reinforcing the effectiveness of these measures across MFL properties.
The rights of workers to organize and voluntarily negotiate with their employers shall be guaranteed as outlined in Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).	0	Federal and state laws guarantee workers the right to freedom of association, and this was confirmed during interviews, with many DNR employees unionized and most contractors working for SMEs. The risk of negative social or environmental impact remains low, supported by strong legal protections and internal DNR policies for resolving worker disputes. These safeguards ensure fair treatment and effective conflict resolution across both DNR and non-DNR forestry operations.
Management planning and operations shall incorporate the results of evaluations of social impact. Consultations shall be maintained with people and groups (both men and women) directly affected by management operations.	0	Social impacts of forest management under the MFL program are assessed through Wisconsin DNR procedures and guidance documents, including the Strategic Direction plan, BMPs for Water Quality, and the Forest Management Guidelines. Historical and archaeological sites are identified using dedicated databases, and foresters maintain communication with neighbors—often sending notices prior to harvests—to minimize potential concerns. Additionally, DNR reviews harvest plans during a 30-day window to ensure adverse effects are avoided, reaffirming the low risk of negative social impact.
Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed for resolving grievances and for providing fair compensation in the case of loss or damage affecting the legal or customary rights, property, resources, or livelihoods of local peoples. Measures shall be taken to avoid such loss or damage.	0	Group members, MFL staff, and service providers interviewed did not report any cases of negligent activity on the part of program participants.
	0	

Principles & Criteria Summary

18.01 Standard Requirement	18.02 Num CARs	18.03 Summary Assessment
	0	
	0	
<p>Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.</p>	0	
<p>Forest management should strive toward economic viability, while taking into account the full environmental, social, and operational costs of production, and ensuring the investments necessary to maintain the ecological productivity of the forest.</p>	0	<p>Confirmed harvest sites visited used sound silviculture that was not based on short-term financial factors. In selection harvests, high quality trees capable of future growth were observed to be systematically retained for future harvests</p>
<p>Forest management and marketing operations should encourage the optimal use and local processing of the forest's diversity of products.</p>	0	<p>Most contractors interviewed or listed on cutting notices were from nearby communities or from neighboring states close enough to group members to be considered local. In order of importance, most timber harvested is sold in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa or Michigan.</p>
<p>Forest management should minimize waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources.</p>	0	<p>As observed on field sites, stumps were low to the ground and tops left in the field. Through interviews with MFL staff and group members, auditors learned that mills communicate desired log dimensions prior to harvest, which was confirmed in the field via evidence of tops and smaller diameter material that did not meet specifications.</p>
<p>Forest management should strive to strengthen and diversify the local economy, avoiding dependence on a single forest product.</p>	0	<p>FME has utilization foresters and economists on staff. These staff maintain regular contact with industry to ensure that new markets are explored. The FME also has data on tourism on DNR-managed lands. Refer also to economic fact sheets prepared by forest economists</p>
<p>Forest management operations shall recognize, maintain, and, where appropriate, enhance the value of forest services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.</p>	0	<p>As part of all management planning processes, the FME plans for several types of wildlife, fisheries, and recreation enhancement activities.</p>
<p>The rate of harvest of forest products shall not exceed levels which can be permanently sustained.</p>	0	<p>The sustained yield harvest in an output of the Wisconsin Forest Inventory and Reporting System (WisFIRS), and is routinely projected for 15 years. At present, growth rates are not used in projections</p>
<p>Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.</p>	0	
<p>Assessment of environmental impacts shall be completed - appropriate to the scale, intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources - and adequately integrated into management systems. Assessments shall include landscape level considerations as well as the impacts of on-site processing facilities. Environmental impacts shall be assessed prior to commencement of site-disturbing operations.</p>	0	<p>Each enrolled MFL property is subject to an FMP (Stewardship Forestry Plan) conforming to program requirements, written by a Certified Plan Writer, and approved by DNR staff. Examples of approved FMP's were reviewed for all field visits recorded in this audit.</p>

Principles & Criteria Summary

18.01 Standard Requirement	18.02 Num CARs	18.03 Summary Assessment
Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas). Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. Inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting shall be controlled.	0	Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) surveys of each MFL property are completed prior to preparing a forest management plan and before a harvest (as documented on Cutting Notices). If the NHI query indicates possible presence of forest-dwelling RTE species, management occurs with the assumption that the species are present. Auditors observed an overall level of conformance with these requirements, including mitigation measures to protect each NHI-identified species on the properties evaluated
Ecological functions and values shall be maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including: a) Forest regeneration and succession. b) Genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity. c) Natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.	0	Maintaining and enhancing under-represented successional stages occurs through implementation of the WI DNR Silviculture Handbook (mandatory for MFL members). Additionally, NHI includes information concerning some under-represented communities.
Representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape shall be protected in their natural state and recorded on maps, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations and the uniqueness of the affected resources.	0	A GAP analysis was completed and Wisconsin's State Natural Area (SNA) program has documented locations of native ecosystems. Representative sites are adequately protected across the state through SNAs on public lands, including public lands managed by the DNR and counties, and on lands owned or managed by conservation organizations.
Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to: control erosion; minimize forest damage during harvesting, road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances; and protect water resources.	0	The existence of the Wisconsin BMPs for Water Quality, Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines, and other manuals produced by DNR, meets this requirement.
Management systems shall promote the development and adoption of environmentally friendly non-chemical methods of pest management and strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides. World Health Organization Type 1A and 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides; pesticides that are persistent, toxic or whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use; as well as any	0	A review of the chemical list maintained by DNR of all group member applications reported demonstrates that no FSC Highly Hazardous Pesticides are used on areas within the scope of the certificate. Field observations and interviews support this information.
Chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non-organic wastes including fuel and oil shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at off-site locations.	0	No evidence of fuel or chemical spills was observed on harvest sites visited. Some harvests had been conducted by FISTA-trained loggers, which includes training on how to handle hazardous spills. Guidance and standards for handling and control of hazardous materials is found in the
Use of biological control agents shall be documented, minimized, monitored and strictly controlled in accordance with national laws and internationally accepted scientific protocols. Use of genetically modified organisms shall be prohibited.	0	WI DNR has used <i>Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki</i> (Btk) and Nucleopolyhedrosis virus (Gypchek) to control spongy moth and other forest pests. The safety and effectiveness of these treatments has been substantiated by the scientific literature and are guided by USDA protocols.
The use of exotic species shall be carefully controlled and actively monitored to avoid adverse ecological impacts.	0	Exotic tree species are not used on MFL properties, though there may be some legacy plantings of exotic conifers (e.g., Norway spruce) on some group member FMUs per interviews with FME staff. Most of these plantings pre-date the enrollment of the MFL program into FSC. Although exotic seed mixes are used for erosion control, these are not considered invasive.

Principles & Criteria Summary

18.01 Standard Requirement	18.02 Num CARs	18.03 Summary Assessment
<p>Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) entails a very limited portion of the forest management unit; and b) does not occur on high conservation value forest areas; and c) will enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, long term conservation benefits across the forest management unit. 	0	MFL statute allows program participants to remove up to five acres from the MFL program for conversion to a building. Removed acreage must be in whole (not partial) acreage units from one to five.
	0	
<p>A management plan - appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations - shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.</p>	0	
<p>The management plan and supporting documents shall provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Management objectives. b) Description of the forest resources to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands. c) Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories. d) Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection. e) Provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics. f) Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments. g) Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species. h) Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership. i) Description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used. 	0	MFL group member files contain several documents that comprise the FMP and address the items of this indicator, including Forest Management Plans (maps, objectives, quantitative and qualitative descriptions, silvicultural and other management systems, environmental assessment and safeguards, RTE species/ communities), Land Exams, Cutting Notices & Reports, letters of communication from MFL staff, NRCS data (e.g., soil maps), NHI database results, and deed & tax records.

Principles & Criteria Summary

18.01 Standard Requirement	18.02 Num CARs	18.03 Summary Assessment
The management plan shall be periodically revised to incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.	0	WI DNR policies and guidance documents make up part of the forest management plan for properties enrolled in the MFL program (WI DNR Forest Tax Law handbook, WI DNR Silviculture Handbook, WI DNR Forest Management Guidelines, WI DNR Private Forestry Handbook, timber sale contracts, BMPs for Water Quality, Ecological Landscapes Handbook, and BMPs for Invasive Species). These documents are revised to respond to changing conditions at least every 10 years. The property-specific Forest Management Plan does not have a regular revision schedule within its 25- or 50-year term. However, DNR staff regularly update the Cutting Notice to reflect changing conditions specific to an MFL property or due to minor changes in policy or guidance.
Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plan.	0	Observed proper implementation of the management plan by well-trained foresters and loggers. Evidence of training includes: (1) Cooperating Foresters are required to complete 10 hours training per year; (2) through FISTA, DNR provides training sessions for loggers; (3) Certified Plan Writers, DNR Foresters, supervisors and other DNR staff who administer the MFL program must attend the annual MFL Recertification training; and (4) DNR collaborates with Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association and UW-Extension to offer meetings and field days for landowners and natural resource professionals.
While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the primary elements of the management plan, including those listed in Criterion 7.1.	0	The collection of documents comprising the management plan and management planning process are part of the public record and as such are publicly available. Confirmed via review of Forest Tax Law Handbook, 221-9 through 221-10.
	0	
	0	
Monitoring shall be conducted - appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management - to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.	0	
The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be determined by the scale and intensity of forest management operations as well as the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment. Monitoring procedures should be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.	0	Monitoring occurs after harvest, The Cutting Notice & Cutting Report contain pre-harvest estimations and post-harvest volumes as reported by landowners, consulting foresters, and/or mills. These volumes are reviewed by Tax Specialists. Cutting report inspection procedures are outlined in the Tax Law Handbook.
Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor, at a minimum, the following indicators: a) Yield of all forest products harvested. b) Growth rates, regeneration and condition of the forest. c) Composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna. d) Environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations. e) Costs, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.	0	Monitoring of forest management under the MFL program includes several key indicators. Yield is tracked through mandatory Cutting Reports submitted for all certified properties, while growth rates, regeneration, and forest condition are assessed using federal FIA data and supplemental surveys conducted by DNR foresters. Additional monitoring covers changes in flora and fauna through programs like DMAP, evaluates environmental and social impacts using economic data, and considers cost, productivity, and efficiency to ensure sustainable and effective forest management practices.
Documentation shall be provided by the forest manager to enable monitoring and certifying organizations to trace each forest product from its origin, a process known as the "chain of custody".	0	See Chapter 221 of Forest Tax Law Handbook and Cutting Notice form (2450-32). The certificate code and FSC claim are correct on the Cutting Notice. The Cutting Notice is the primary tool in use for determining FSC claims. The FME has also included its FSC certificate information on its webpage. See OBS 2025.1
The results of monitoring shall be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the management plan.	0	Field visits and landowner interviews conducted during this audit included numerous examples of management adaptation – including modification of scheduled activities – as a response to formal and informal forest monitoring activities.

Principles & Criteria Summary

18.01 Standard Requirement	18.02 Num CARs	18.03 Summary Assessment
While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring indicators, including those listed in Criterion 8.2.	0	Considerable access to forest monitoring by the DNR is readily accessible online. The overall transparency and responsiveness of the MFL program provides clear evidence of conformity to this indicator.
Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be	0	
Assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests will be completed, appropriate to scale and intensity of forest management.	0	DNR's assessment for HCVF concluded that to-date no HCVF has been identified on MFL properties. This initial conclusion is supported by state resources
The consultative portion of the certification process must place emphasis on the identified conservation attributes, and options for the maintenance thereof.	0	To date, no HCVFs have been detected on MFL properties.
The management plan shall include and implement specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the applicable conservation attributes consistent with the precautionary approach. These measures shall be specifically included in the publicly available management plan summary.	0	To date, no HCVFs have been detected on MFL properties.
Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes.	0	To date, no HCVFs have been detected on MFL properties.
Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1-9, and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world's needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.	0	
The management objectives of the plantation, including natural forest conservation and restoration objectives, shall be explicitly stated in the management plan, and clearly demonstrated in the implementation of the plan.	0	NA
The design and layout of plantations should promote the protection, restoration and conservation of natural forests, and not increase pressures on natural forests. Wildlife corridors, streamside zones and a mosaic of stands of different ages and rotation periods, shall be used in the layout of the plantation, consistent with the scale of the operation. The scale and	0	NA
Diversity in the composition of plantations is preferred, so as to enhance economic, ecological and social stability. Such diversity may include the size and spatial distribution of management units within the landscape,	0	NA
The selection of species for planting shall be based on their overall suitability for the site and their appropriateness to the management	0	NA
A proportion of the overall forest management area, appropriate to the scale of the plantation and to be determined in regional standards, shall be managed so as to restore the site to a natural forest cover.	0	NA
Measures shall be taken to maintain or improve soil structure, fertility, and biological activity. The techniques and rate of harvesting, road and trail construction and maintenance, and the choice of species shall not result in long term soil degradation or adverse impacts on water quality, quantity or substantial deviation from stream course drainage patterns.	0	NA
Measures shall be taken to prevent and minimize outbreaks of pests, diseases, fire and invasive plant introductions. Integrated pest management shall form an essential part of the management plan, with primary reliance on prevention and biological control methods rather than chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Plantation management should make every effort to move away from chemical pesticides and fertilizers, including	0	NA
Appropriate to the scale and diversity of the operation, monitoring of plantations shall include regular assessment of potential on-site and off-site ecological and social impacts, (e.g. natural regeneration, effects on water resources and soil fertility, and impacts on local welfare and social well-being), in addition to those elements addressed in principles 8, 6 and 4. No	0	NA