

## **Wisconsin DNR State Lands**

101 South Webster Street, Madison, WI 53703

1Y941

SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules<sup>®</sup> Section 2

Forest Management

Recertification Audit

August 17-21, 2015

3

## NSF International Forestry Program Audit Report

### A. Program Participant's Name

Wisconsin DNR State Lands

#### NSF Customer Number (FRS)

1Y941

### B. Scope

Forest management operations on the following WI State Lands:

Categories included in the DNR Lands forest certification review include:

- Northern and Southern State Forests
- State Parks
- State Recreation Trails
- State Wildlife Areas (including leased federal lands, Meadow Valley W.A.)
- State Fisheries Areas
- State Natural Areas
- Natural Resource Protection and Management Areas
- Lower Wisconsin Riverway
- State Wild Rivers
- State Owned Islands
- Stewardship Demonstration Forests

The following DNR properties (about 30,477 acres) are excluded from the certification project:

- Agricultural fields (due to potential GMO issue)
- Stream Bank Protection Areas (eased lands not under DNR management)
- Forest Legacy Easements (eased lands not under DNR management)
- States Fish Hatcheries and Rearing Ponds (intensive non-forest use)
- State Forest Nurseries (intensive non-forest use)
- Nonpoint Pollution Control Easements (eased lands not under DNR management)
- Poynette Game Farm and McKenzie Environmental Center (intensive non-forest use)
- Boat Access Sites (intensive non-forest use)
- Fire Tower Sites (intensive non-forest use)
- Radio Tower Sites (intensive non-forest use)
- Ranger Stations (intensive non-forest use)
- Administrative Offices and Storage Buildings (intensive non-forest use)
- State Park Intensively Developed Recreation Areas (intensive non-forest use) e.g. Peninsula State Park golf course, Blue Mound State Park swimming pool

The SFI Standard certification number is NSF-SFIS-1Y941.

### C. NSF Audit Team

Norman Boatwright, SFI Lead Auditor, Brendan Grady, FSC Lead Auditor and Michael Thompson, FSC Team Auditor

### D. Audit Dates

August 17-21, 2015

### E. Reference Documentation

SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2

**Company Documentation**

Numerous policy and procedure documents.

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

- Acceptable with no nonconformities
- Acceptable with transitional nonconformities that must have an approved, implemented corrective action plan in-place by December 31, 2015
- Not acceptable with minor nonconformities and/or one or two major nonconformities – corrective action required.
- Several major nonconformities – certification may be cancelled unless immediate action is taken

**G. Changes to Operations or to the Standard**

Are there any significant changes in operations, procedures, specifications, facility records, etc., from the previous visit?

- Yes (Please explain: explanation)
- No

**H. Other Issues Reviewed**

- Yes     No     N/A    Public report from previous audit(s) is posted on the SFI/SBP/etc. website
- Yes     No     N/A    Relevant logos or labels are utilized correctly.
- Yes     No     N/A    Nonconformities from previous audit were reviewed.  
If yes, briefly explain: No CARs issued for the 2014 audit.

**I. New Corrective Action Requests**

- Corrective action plan is not required.
- Minor Nonconformities: Corrective action plan should be provided within thirty (30) days of this visit. NSF may suspend the certificate if the plan is not received within sixty (60) days. Effectiveness of implementation of corrective actions will be verified during the next regularly scheduled visit.
- Major Nonconformities: Corrective action plan should be provided within thirty (30) days of this visit. The auditor will make arrangements to verify the corrective action has been effectively implemented. All major nonconformities must be closed by a special verification audit or by desk review. NSF may suspend the certificate if the corrective action plan is not received within sixty (60) days or if evidence verifying the corrective action is not provided within 120 days.

At the conclusion of this audit, the following number of draft NCs was communicated:

Major: 0            Minor: 0

In addition, no opportunities for improvement (OFIs) were identified.

**J. Future Audit Schedule**

Following the Recertification Audit, continued certification requires annual assessments commonly referred to as “Surveillance Audits”. Additionally, at the end of the certification period, maintaining certification requires the completion of a “Recertification Audit”. Your next audit is a Surveillance Audit, tentatively scheduled for the week of August 15, 2016.

**Appendices**

- [Appendix 1:](#)    Audit Notification Letter and Audit Schedule
- [Appendix 2:](#)    SFI Forest Management Audit Checklist and Site Visit Notes
- [Appendix 3:](#)    SFI Forest Management Public Summary Report

[Appendix 4:](#) Meeting Attendance

[Appendix 5:](#) Form for Reporting SFI/FS Certification (not included as there are no changes)

**Appendix 1**  
**Audit Notification Letter and Audit Schedule**

VIA EMAIL

August 13, 2015

Mark A. Heyde  
Forest Certification Coordinator  
Public and Private Forestry Section  
Bureau of Forest Management  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
phone: (608) 267-0565  
cell: (608) 220-9780  
[Mark.Heyde@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Mark.Heyde@wisconsin.gov)

**Re: Confirmation of 2015 SFI Standard Recertification Audit**

Dear Mark,

As we have discussed, I am scheduled to conduct the Recertification Audit of the WIDNR State Lands Monday-Thursday August 17-21, 2015. This is a full review of your SFI Program to confirm that it continues to be in conformance with the SFI Standard and that continual improvement is being made.

The audit team will consist of me as SFI Lead Auditor, Branden Grady as the FSC Lead Auditor and Mike Thompson as the Team Auditor for both Standards.

During the audit I will:

1. Review progress on achieving SFI objectives and performance measures and the results of the management review of your SFI Program;
2. Review selected components of your SFI program;
3. Verify effective implementation of any corrective action plans from the previous NSF audit;
4. Review logo and/or label use;
5. Confirm public availability of public reports; and
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of planned activities aimed at continual improvement of your SFI Program.

You will be audited to the 2015-2019 SFI Standards and Rules®, Section 2.

We have worked together to develop the following tentative schedule. The schedule can be adapted either in advance or on

I look forward to visiting you and evaluating continual improvement in your SFI Program. If you have any questions regarding this planned audit, please call me at 843.229.1851.

Sincerely yours,

**Norman I. Boatwright, III**

Norman I. Boatwright, III

Lead Auditor, NSF

Enclosure: Agenda for Surveillance Audit

## WDNR State Lands Forest Certification Audit

### **2015 FSC & SFI Audit Schedule Southeast WI**

**August 17 (Monday) – August 21 (Friday)**

#### **High Level Audit Schedule**

August 16<sup>th</sup> (Sunday) – Travel Day – Auditors arrive - Madison  
August 17<sup>th</sup> (Monday) – Kick-off meeting – Madison 8 AM followed by field audits (2 teams)  
August 18<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) – Field Audit - 3 teams  
August 19<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) – Field Audit - 3 teams  
August 20<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) – Field Audit - 3 teams  
August 21<sup>st</sup> (Friday) – Exit Briefing 10:30 – Noon – Madison

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### **August 16<sup>th</sup> (Sun.) – Travel Day**

#### **Overnight: Concourse Hotel**

1 West Dayton St  
Madison, WI 53703

**Hotel Reservations:** Grady, Boatwright, Thompson

**Hotel Reservations:** Buchholz

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### **August 17<sup>th</sup> (Monday)**

#### **8:00 - 9:00 am Room 413**

**Certification Kick-Off** – ICIT, Program Managers

Welcome and Introductions

Overview of Certification Systems – FSC and SFI Auditors

Major Organizational and System Changes/Initiatives – DNR ICIT

Review of 2014 CAR's and OFI – DNR Heyde

Logistics For Week – Buchholz / Heyde

#### **9:00 am – 10:30 am Room 413**

**FSC and SFI Joint Indicator Review - Management Planning and Conservation of Biological Diversity**

Brendan, Mike, Norman

**Statewide Systems for Key Program Functions of Interest**

Forest Management Planning – 45 min

- Property Planning – Master plan, IFMP (Buchholz, Brusoe)
- Property and statewide Forest Inventory, harvest planning, goals, and monitoring (Prichard)
- Timber Sale Implementation, 2460’s, bidding, administration, etc (Schwantes)

Conservation of Biological Diversity and Wildlife – 45 min (Zine et al)

- Landscape planning – Ecological Landscape, WAP, Statewide Plans etc (Zine)
- Wildlife Overview - Trcka

**10:30 am --- FSC AUDITOR (Mike) FIELD VISIT – Buchholz**

*See NE Team schedule below*

**10:30 -11:00 Room 428 – Brendan and Norman**

- real estate acquisitions, easements or other land tenure questions, (Haag)
- timely payment of taxes or fees, (Haag)
- law enforcement, (Warnke)
- departmental budget (Warnke)
- Wood products marketing (Hubbard et al)
- legal or regulatory compliance, (Quinn) (Friday before close out or phone)

**11:00 am --- FSC AUDITOR (Brendan) FIELD VISIT - Wickham**

*See NW Team schedule below*

**SFI Full audit Indicators Room 428**

Norman

11:00 – 11:45 ICIT Open Session

11:45- 12:45 Lunch

1:00 to 4 pm Room 413

- 1:00 -2 Reforestation, Silviculture and Guidelines – **Hutnick**, Edge (phone), **Herrick**
- 2-3:00 Forest Health (invasives, etc) – Becky Gray Et al
- 3:30-3:30 Research, Trials, Inventory and Monitoring – **Hutnik**, Trisha, Stoltman

**3:45- 4:15 Wrap up – SFI, Heyde**



## **August 17<sup>th</sup> (Monday) - NE Team**

**Field Audit:** Depart Madison at 10:30 AM

**Auditor:** Mike Thompson

**ICIT Team:** Aaron Buchholz

**Lunch** – Fond du Lac area

### **Mullet Creek Wildlife Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Hillview Road by the intersection with Highway 23 (south of Hwy 23).

**Property Manager:** Dan Weidert – 920.838.1527

**Foresters:** Tom Vanden Elzen – 920.427.9834

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine

**Planned Arrival Time:** 12:45 PM

### **Killsnake Wildlife Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Parking lot on the north side of Aebischer Road which is ¾ of a mile east of the intersection with County Highway Y.

**Property Manager:** Natayna Hayden – 920.629-2370

**Foresters:** Tom Vanden Elzen - 920.427.9834

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine

**Planned Arrival Time:** 2:00 PM

### **Collins Marsh Wildlife Area (2 sites)**

**Meeting Location:** Travel from Killsnake with manager to 1<sup>st</sup> site

**Property Manager:** Natayna Hayden – 920.629-2370

**Foresters:** Andy Noth – 920.901.6272

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine

**Planned Arrival Time:** 2:45 PM

### **Overnight:**

**Location:** Holiday Inn, Manitowoc

**Hotel Reservations:** Mike Thompson

**Hotel Reservations:** Matt Zine

## **August 17<sup>th</sup> (Monday) - NW Team**

**Field Audit:** Depart Madison at 11:00 AM

**Auditor:** Brenden Grady

**ICIT Team:** RJ Wickham

**Lunch** - pick up something in route to Observatory Hill

**Observatory Hill State Natural Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Gillette Ave. Parking Lot Sec. 8 T14N R10E Buffalo East Twp., Marquette Co

**Property Manager:** Jon Robaidek – 715.213.2865

**Foresters:** Scott Sullivan – 608.369.1104

**Other Staff:**

**Planned Arrival Time:** 1:00 PM

**Plainfield Tunnel Lakes State Natural Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Aniwa Rd. Parking Lot Sec. 18 T201N R9E Oasis Twp., Waushara Co.

**Property Manager:** Jon Robaidek – 715.213.2865

**Foresters:** Joe Tucker 920.450.4552 and Jason Hennes

**Other Staff:**

**Planned Arrival Time:** 3:00 PM

**Overnight:**

**Location:** Borders Inn and Suites, Wautoma

**Hotel Reservations:** Brendan Grady

**Hotel Reservations:** none

**August 18<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) – NE Team**

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Depart Manitowoc at 8:00 AM

**Auditor:** Mike Thompson

**ICIT Team:** Aaron Buchholz

**Peninsula State Park (2 sites)**

**Meeting Location:** Contact Station

**Property Manager:** Kelli Bruns – 920.365.9738 and/or Erin Brown 920.304.6945

**Foresters:** Chris Plzak - 920-655-1640 & Bill Ruff – 920-493-0472

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine, John Lubbers, Kate Lenz, Josh Martinez 920.366.0468

**Planned Arrival Time:** 9:45 AM

**Mud Lake Wildlife Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Birch Lane parking lot

**Property Manager:** Josh Martinez – 920.366.0468

**Foresters:** Chris Plzak & Bill Ruff

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine, John Lubbers, Kate Lenz, Josh Martinez 920.366.0468

**Planned Arrival Time:** 11:00 AM

**Lunch** – Coyote Roadhouse, 3026 Co Rd E, Baileys Harbor, WI 54202  
(920) 839-9192 11:45 PM

**Whitefish Dunes State Park (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Nature Center

**Property Manager:** Fred Viste – 920.823.2400

**Foresters:** Chris Plzak & Bill Ruff

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine, John Lubbers, Kate Lenz, Josh Martinez 920.366.0468

**Planned Arrival Time:** 1:15 PM

**Point Beach State Forest (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Contact Station

**Property Manager:** Guy Willman – 920.629.4584

**Foresters:** Andy Noth - 920.901.6272

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine, Natanya Hayden

**Planned Arrival Time:** 3:30 PM

**Overnight:**

**Location:** Holiday Inn, Manitowoc

**Hotel Reservations:** Mike Thompson

**Hotel Reservations:** Matt Zine

**August 18<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) – NW Team**

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**8:00 am:** Meet at Wautoma DNR office

**Auditor:** Brendan Grady

**ICIT Team:** RJ Wickham

**Meeting Location:** Wautoma DNR Office 8:00 AM

**White River Fishery Area – T&C sale (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** East of 13<sup>th</sup> Ave/Buttercup Ave Sec 30 T19N R10E Wautoma Twp. Waushara Co.

**Property Manager:** Jake Fries 920.420.0384

**Foresters:** Jeff Nyquist - 920.293.1399

**Other Staff:** Jason Hennes, Forestry Technician 920.450.2567; Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 8:30 AM

**Mecan River Fishery Area – Gypsy Moth sale (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** 9<sup>th</sup> Ave North Parking Lot Sec. 8 T18N R9E Richford Twp., Waushara Co.

**Property Manager:** Jim Holzwart – 920.420.2567

**Foresters:** R.J. Wickham- 920.369.6248

**Other Staff:** Jason Hennes, Forestry Technician 920.450.2567; Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 9:30 AM

**Mecan River Fishery Area – Headwaters sale (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Cottonville Ct. Sec. 7 T18N R9E Richford Twp. Waushara Co.

**Property Manager:** Jim Holzwart – 920.420.2567

**Foresters:** Jason Hennes - 920.450.8637; Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Other Staff:** Jeff Nyquist, Forester

**Planned Arrival Time:** 10:45 AM

**Lunch – Coloma Noon**

**Mecan River Fishery Area – Chaffee Headwaters sale (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** West of Power Plant on County CH Sec. 34 T18N R8E Coloma Twp. Waushara Co.

**Property Manager:** Jim Holzwart – 920.420.2567

**Foresters:** R.J. Wickham & Jason Hennes, Forestry Technician 920.369.6248

**Other Staff:** Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 1:00 PM

**Mecan River Fishery Area – Cougar sale (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Czech Ave Sec. 36 18N R8E Coloma Twp. Waushara Co.

**Property Manager:** Jim Holzwart – 920.420.2567

**Foresters:** R.J. Wickham & Jason Hennes, Forestry Technician

**Other Staff:** Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 2:00 PM

**Overnight:**

**Location:** Borders Inn and Suites, Wautoma

**Hotel Reservations:** Brendan Grady

**Hotel Reservations:** none

**August 18<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) – South Team**

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**9:00 am:** Leave Madison

**Auditors:** Norman Boatwright

**ICIT Team:** Mark Heyde

**Deansville Wildlife Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Western Parking Lot off of Sun Prairie Road

**Property Manager:** Andy Paulios – 608.534.0092

**Foresters:** Randy Stampfl—920.382.0657

**Other Staff:**

**Planned Arrival Time:** 9:30 AM

**Waunakee Wildlife Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Lodi-Springfield Road just north of State Highway 19; sec. 9, T8N, R8E, Springfield Township

**Property Manager:** Andy Paulios – 608.534.0092

**Foresters:** Steve Holaday – 608.576.6130

**Other Staff:**

**Planned Arrival Time:** 10:30 AM

**Lunch** – Grab food at Subway for field lunch

**Rowan Creek Fishery Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Meet in Subway parking lot just east of Poynette I-90/94 ramp.

**Property Manager:** Nathan Nye – 608.635.5143

**Foresters:** Bruce Henderson – 608.576.3138 and Joel Green 608.588.7725)

**Other Staff:** Sarah Kehrli – 608.220.3474

**Planned Arrival Time:** 11:30 AM

**Pine Island Wildlife Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Travel together from Rowan Creek Fishery Area site

**Property Manager:** Sarah Kehrli – 608.220.3474

**Foresters:** Bruce Henderson – 608.576.3138 and Joel Green 608.588.7725)

**Other Staff:**

**Planned Arrival Time:** 1:20 PM

**French Creek Wildlife Area (2 sites)**

**Meeting Location:** Travel together from Pine Island Wildlife Area site.

**Property Manager:** Sarah Kehrli – 608.220.3474

**Foresters:** Bruce Henderson – 608.576.3138 and Joel Green 608.588.7725)

**Other Staff:**

**Planned Arrival Time:** 2:20 PM

**Overnight:**

**Location:** Concourse Hotel, Madison

**Hotel Reservations:** Norman Boatwright

**Hotel Reservations:**

## August 19<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) – NE Team

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**8:00 am: Leave Manitowoc**

**Auditors:** Mike Thompson

**ICIT Team:** Aaron Buchholz

### Kohler Andre State Park (2 sites)

**Meeting Location:** Kohler-Andrae State Park Office -1020 Beach Park Ln. –Sheboygan, WI 53081

**Property Manager:** Carolyn Morgen – 920.980.1782

**Foresters:** Adam Zirbel and Julie Peltier – 920.838.1039 and (414) 303-0147

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine, Dan Weidert

**Planned Arrival Time:** 8:40 AM

### Property Overview and Timber Sale Establishment Procedures (discussion)

**Meeting Location:** KMSF Headquarters

**Property Manager:** Jason Quast

**Foresters:** Adam Zirbel and Tom Vanden Elzen – 920.838.1039 and 920.427.9834

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine, Dan Weidert, Julie Peltier, Clint Gilman

**Planned Arrival Time:** 10:20 AM

### Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit (4 sites)

**Meeting Location:** KMSF Headquarters

**Property Manager:** Jason Quast – 920.602.0735

**Foresters:** Adam Zirbel and Tom Vanden Elzen – 920.838.1039 and 920.427.9834

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine, Dan Weidert, Julie Peltier, Clint Gilman

**Planned Arrival Time:**

Lunch at the Hamburger Haus – Dundee, WI

### Overnight:

**Location:** Holiday Inn, Manitowoc

**Hotel Reservations:** Mike Thompson

**Hotel Reservations:** Matt Zine

## August 19<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) – NW Team

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**8:000 am:** Leave Wautoma Office or hotel

**Auditors:** Brendan Grady

**ICIT Team:** RJ Wickham

**Mecan River Fishery Area – Mekan Camp sale (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Deerborn Dr. Parking Lot Sec. 16 T17NR10E Crystal Lake Twp. Marquette Co.

**Property Manager:** Jim Holzwart – 920.420.2567

**Foresters:** Scott Sullivan & Sara Fischer 608.369.1104 & 920.366.2106

**Other Staff:** Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 9:00 AM

*Grab lunch in Montello for field lunch*

**Grand River Wildlife Area – Dam Road sale (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Dam Road Sec. 12 T14N R10E Buffalo East Twp. Marquette Co.

**Property Manager:** Jim Holzwart – 920.420.2567

**Foresters:** Scott Sullivan 608.639.1104

**Other Staff:** Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 10:30 AM

**Lunch** - in field 11:30 AM

**Grand River Wildlife Area – Grand River sale (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Travel w/property manager from first site

**Property Manager:** Jim Holzwart – 920.420.2567

**Foresters:** Sarah Fischer 920.366.2106

**Other Staff:** Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 12:30 PM

**Grand River Wildlife Area – Wildlife Management Activities (duck banding, prairie management, pheasant stocking)**

**Meeting Location:** Wildlife Area – various locations

**Property Manager:** Jim Holzwart – 920.420.2567

**Other Staff:** Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** Flexible

**Timber Sale Establishment Procedures (discussion)**

**Meeting Location:** Montello DNR Ranger Station

**Property Manager:** NA

**Foresters:** Wautoma Team (RJ Wickham) – 920.369.6248

**Other Staff:**

**Planned Arrival Time:** Flexible

**Overnight:**

**Location:** Borders Inn and Suites, Wautoma

**Hotel Reservations:** Brendan Grady

**Hotel Reservations:** none

## **August 19<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) – South Team**

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**8:00 am:** Leave Madison

**Auditor:** Norman Boatwright

**ICIT Team:** Mark Heyde

### **Waterloo Wildlife Area (2 sites)**

**Meeting Location:** Parking Lot at the end of Conservation Lane, Waterloo

**Property Manager:** Mark Witecha - 920.988.2996

**Foresters:** Randy Stampfl - 920.382.0657

**Other Staff:** Dave Sample, Sharene Smith, Sharon Fandel

**Planned Arrival Time:** 8:35 AM

### **Mud Lake Wildlife Area (4 sites)**

**Meeting Location:** Ride together from Waterloo Wildlife Area, meet Paul at Parking Lot near Hwy G bridge

**Property Manager:** Paul Samerdyke – 920.763.6405

**Foresters:** Randy Stampfl - 920.382.0657

**Other Staff:** Dave Sample, Sharene Smith, Sharon Fandel

**Planned Arrival Time:** 10:00 AM

**Lunch** – Wedl’s Burger Stand, 200 E Racine St., Jefferson, WI 12:30 PM

### **Rome Pond WA (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Western parking lot on Froelich Rd., just east of County F

**Property Manager:** Mark Witecha - 920.988.2996

**Foresters:** Randy Stampfl - 920.382.0657

**Other Staff:** Dave Sample, Sharene Smith, Sharon Fandel

**Planned Arrival Time:** 2:00 PM

### **Lulu Lake Natural Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** KMSF – Southern Unit headquarters, S91 W39091 Highway 59 Eagle, WI

**Property Manager:** Sharon Fandel - 608.279.4768

**Foresters:** Mike Sieger - 262.470.5225

**Other Staff:** Dave Sample, Sharene Smith, Sharon Fandel

**Planned Arrival Time:** 3:00 PM

### **Overnight:**

**Location:** Concourse Hotel, Madison

**Hotel Reservations:** Norman Boatwright

**Hotel Reservations:**



## August 20<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) – NE Team

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**8:30 am: Leave Manitowoc**

**Auditors:** Mike Thompson

**ICIT Team:** Aaron Buchholz

### Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit (3 sites)

**Meeting Location:** Plymouth DNR Service Center – 1155 Pilgrim Rd. Plymouth, WI 53073

**Property Manager:** Jason Quast – 920.602.0735

**Foresters:** Adam Zirbel – 920.838.1039

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine, Julie Peltier, Clint Gilman, Dan Weidert

**Planned Arrival Time:** 9:30 AM

**Lunch** – Mayville or nearby to be determined 12:00

### Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area Management – Property Overview, Non-forest management and Explorium

**Meeting Location:** Headquarters/office

**Property Manager:** Paul Samerdyke – 920.763.6405

**Foresters:** Randy Stampfl – 920. 382-0657 (optional)

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine

**Planned Arrival Time:** 1:00 PM

### Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area (1 site)

**Meeting Location:** Travel from Headquarters/office

**Property Manager:** Paul Samerdyke – 920.763.6405

**Foresters:** Randy Stampfl – 920. 382-0657

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine

**Planned Arrival Time:** 3:00 PM

### Overnight:

**Location:** Concourse Hotel, Madison

**Hotel Reservations:** Norman Boatwright, Brendan Grady, Mike Thompson

**Hotel Reservations:** Aaron Buchholz

## August 20<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) – NW Team

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**8:00 am:** Leave Wautoma Office or hotel

**Auditors:** Brendan Grady

**ICIT Team:** RJ Wickham

**Rat River Wildlife Area (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** North Loop Road Parking Lot

**Property Manager:** Bryan Woodbury – 920.420.2564

**Foresters:** Tom Vanden Elzen – 920. 427.9834

**Other Staff:** Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 9:00 AM

**Glacial Habitat Restoration Area – Orton/Brooks (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** W8654 Oak Hill Road, Town of Poygan, Winnebago Co.

**Property Manager:** Rachel Brookins - 920.252.3480

**Foresters:** Tom Vanden Elzen – 920. 427.9834

**Other Staff:** Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 10:15 AM

**Glacial Habitat Restoration Area – Soltysik (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** N1475 County Road M, Town of Nepeuskun, Winnebago Co.

**Property Manager:** Rachel Brookins - 920.252.3480

**Foresters:** Tom Vanden Elzen – 920. 427.9834

**Other Staff:** Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 11:10 AM

**Lunch** – grab something in Rosendale in route to Baber Noon

**Glacial Habitat Restoration Area – Baber (1 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Gallager Road, Town of Waupun, Fond du Lac Co.

**Property Manager:** James Christopoulos – 920.210.3642

**Foresters:** Tom Vanden Elzen – 920.427.9834

**Other Staff:** Ellen Barth 920.410.1565

**Planned Arrival Time:** 12:30 PM

**Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area Management – Property Overview, Non-forest management and Explorium**

**Meeting Location:** Headquarters/office

**Property Manager:** Paul Samerdyke – 920.763.6405

**Foresters:** Randy Stampfl – 920. 382-0657 (optional)

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine

**Planned Arrival Time:** Discussion will start with NE audit group @ 1:00 PM, join group upon arrival

**Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area (1 site) with NE audit group**

**Meeting Location:** Travel from Headquarters/office

**Property Manager:** Paul Samerdyke – 920.763.6405

**Foresters:** Randy Stampfl – 920. 382-0657

**Other Staff:** Matt Zine

**Planned Arrival Time:** 3:00 PM

**Overnight:**

**Location:** Concourse Hotel, Madison

**Hotel Reservations:** Norman Boatwright, Brendan Grady, Mike Thompson

**Hotel Reservations:** Aaron Buchholz

**August 20<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) – South Team**

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**8:00 am:** Leave Madison

**Auditor:** Norman Boatwright

**ICIT Team:** Mark Heyde

**Timber Sale Establishment Procedures (discussion)**

**Meeting Location:** Fitchburg Office

**Property Manager:** NA

**Foresters:** Steve Holaday, Aaron Young

**Other Staff:**

**Planned Arrival Time:** 8:15 *Depart at 9:15 AM*

**Prince's Point Wildlife Area (2 sites)**

**Meeting Location:** Meet Mark at 2<sup>nd</sup> parking lot on Koch Rd

**Property Manager:** Mark Witecha - 920.988.2996

**Foresters:** Randy Stampfl - 920.382.0657

**Other Staff:** Dave Sample, Sharon Fandel - 608.279.4768

**Planned Arrival Time:** 10:00 AM

**Lunch** on route to Avon Bottoms TBD

**Avon Bottoms Wildlife Area (2 site)**

**Meeting Location:** Meet at the Sand Burr Restaurant, 6929 County Hwy T, Brodhead, WI 53520

**Property Manager:** Nathan Holoubek for Mike Foy – (608) 289-1689

**Foresters:** Nick Koltz - 715.558.1286

**Other Staff:** Dave Sample, Sharon Fandel, Nathan Fayram

**Planned Arrival Time:** 1:00 PM

**Swenson Wet Prairie State Natural Area @ Avon Bottoms Wildlife Area – Management Discussion**

**Meeting Location:** Travel with staff from other Avon sites

**Property Manager:** Sharon Fandel- 608.279.4768, Nathan Fayram - 608.438.4229

**Foresters:** Nick Koltz - 715.558.1286

**Other Staff:** Dave Sample, Nathan Holoubek for Mike Foy – (608) 289-1689

**Planned Arrival Time:** 2:30 PM

**Overnight:**

**Location:** Concourse Hotel, Madison

**Hotel Reservations:** Norman Boatwright, Brendan Grady, Mike Thompson

**Hotel Reservations:** Aaron Buchholz

**August 21<sup>th</sup> (Friday)**

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**10:30 – 12:00 am      Room 413**

**Certification Close Out** – ICIT, Program Managers, Auditors

**Contacts:**

Mark Heyde (FR)      608-220-9780 (cell), 608-267-0565 (office)  
Aaron Buchholz (FWP) 920-901-0506 (cell), 920-662-5115 (office)  
Jeff Prey (PR)      608-520-3368 (cell), 608-266-2182 (office)  
Paul Cunningham (FM) 608-267-7502 (office)  
Matt Zine (NHC)      608-575-7035 (cell), 608-266-8916 (office)  
Teague Prichard (FR) 608-628-5606 (cell), 608-264-8883 (office)  
Joe Schwantes (FR)   608-264-9217 (office)  
Frank Trcka (WM)      414-303-0104 (cell), 608) 267-7472 (office)  
Craig Anderson (PR) 608-792-0086 (cell), 608-264-8957 (office)  
Jim Warren (FR)      608-575-3863 (cell), 608-264-8990 (office)

**Appendix 2**  
**SFI Forest Management Audit Checklist**

## NSF International Forestry Program

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

FRS #1Y941: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources – DNR State Lands

Date of audit: August 3-5, 2015

Auditor: Norman Boatwright unless otherwise noted.

#### 1.2 Additional Requirements

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

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

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

Audit Notes: FM only.

#### Objective 1 Forest Management Planning

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

##### Performance Measure 1.1

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

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

Audit Notes: Management Plans for selected tracts visited in 2015 were reviewed. All tracts with active or recently-completed timber sales (sold after March 15, 2012) are covered by Master Plans or Interim Forest Management Plans (IFMP); this is consistent with policy.

The Lands Division is working through a backlog of Master Plans. For the 2010-2014 master planning period there are 4 completed plans, 19 active plans (being worked on) and 19 scheduled. The three bureaus involved (Fisheries, Facilities and Lands, Wildlife) are increasing the priority placed on planning. Interim Forest Management Plans are developed for properties too small to have master plans, or where management actions are needed but the master plan has not been completed. The audit team reviewed several Interim Forest Management Plans, including. These plans included the required elements needed to supplement wider scale plans.

**Table 1: Master Plan status of Tier 1 & 2 properties.**

PLANNING STATUS	PROPERTIES	PERCENT	ACRES	PERCENT
NR44 plans in effect	76	19%	684,519	49%
Active pre-planning phase	2	1%	2,392	0%
Active Phase 1	2	1%	12,074	1%
Active Phase 2	145	36%	177,505	13%
No NR44 plan needed	3	1%	2,358	0%

No MP prepared	50	13%	166,833	8%
Old MP (pre-NR44)	121	30%	411,059	29%
<b>TOTAL Tier 1 &amp; 2</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,406,740</b>	<b>100%</b>

Harvest levels across various types of ownership are managed through the WisFIRs system to ensure sustainable harvest levels. Harvesting decisions are driven by stand-level analysis and prescriptions adjusted to meet property-specific goals and agency mandates and guidance. State forest planning is complete and up-to-date. Planning for the properties administered within the Lands Division is not as complete, but harvest levels have been below growth and consistent with the broader range of objectives.

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

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

**Note:** Requirement is new or significantly revised. Transition rules apply until December 31, 2015.

N/A     Conformance     Exceeds     O.F.I.     Major NC     Minor NC     Transitional NC

Audit Notes: The WisFIRS system (Wisconsin Forest Inventory and Reporting System) is developed and maintained to house forest inventory from all state lands. DNR has a staff of 4 full time employees working on planning. All state forests have an approved Master Plan.

**Statewide:**

- Division of Forestry Five-Year Strategic Plan
- 2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Wisconsin Land Legacy Report: An inventory of places to meet Wisconsin’s future conservation and recreation needs; 2006.
- Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (six-year plan, to be updated by Wildlife Heritage Conservation).

**Property Master Planning** (property-level planning approach, process outlined in state law and in administrative code NR-44, data-driven):

- In 2015 NRB had approved plans on 76 properties and the department is currently working on 13 master plan projects and four amendments with a number of these expected to come before the NRB yet in 2015. The department is currently working on 13 master plan projects and four amendments with a number of these expected to come before the NRB yet in 2015. Table 1 on the next page provides an overview of the master planning workload. Approximately half of the acres of Tier 1 and 2 department managed lands have NR 44 compliant master plans. Table 2 illustrates that while the majority of the properties are Tier 3, the majority of acres of DNR managed lands are Tier 1 and 2.

*Table 2: Overview of Three-tiered system for department managed properties.*

PLANNING STATUS	PROPERTIES	PERCENT	ACRES	PERCENT
Tier 1 & 2 properties	399	45%	1,406,740	78%
“Named” Tier 3 properties	477	53%	71,849	4%
Statewide projects (all Tier 3)	19	2%	321,778	18%
<b>TOTAL DNR Managed Lands</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,800,367</b>	<b>100%</b>

- Tier 1 and Tier 2 properties require an NR-44 Master Plan.
- Tier 3 properties don’t have as detailed plans.
- Supported by county, sub-county, or multi-county “Integrated Meetings”.
- Master Plans can be updated through targeted variances.

**Harvest-Level Planning**

- WisFIRs database provides stand-level information used to determine which areas are likely ready to be treated
- Forester and property manager discuss, obtain context
- Field review by foresters may or may not include robust re-inventory (age of data often determines) or a quick few plots
- Field foresters set up sale, with 3 major sources of guidance (and many other directives and guidance): 1. Silvicultural Manual; 2.Public Lands Handbook; 3.Timber Sale Handbook
- Other sources of information: Natural Heritage Database and the State’s Historic and Archeological Database
- Timber Sale Notices and Cutting Reports, including Narrative Report; accompanied by sale map
- Reviewed and approved by the property manager and forestry supervisor
- Sales valued over \$3,000 must be sold by public bid; must be advertised in local papers

The required items a through g are included in forest management plans and associated supporting documentation such as the Annual Work Plans, Annual Accomplishment Reports, Manuals, and associated guidance documents for the programs. Maps and inventory data are stored and used in the GIS/database system known as WisFIRs. Management Plans for the tracts visited in 2014 were reviewed to determine that they, in conjunction with other guidance documents and assessments, comprise a long-term resource analysis. In WisFIRs – Use of an “H” code as the objective when this is unknown for the stand and/or overall property, such as in the absence of an up-to-date master plan. Foresters inventory a portion of each forest annually using the RECON system. FIA data provide broad growth determinations.

Some harvests are targeted at ecological restoration (e.g. savannas); ecological reference area harvests may not be consistent with growth and yield models because timber is not the primary objective.

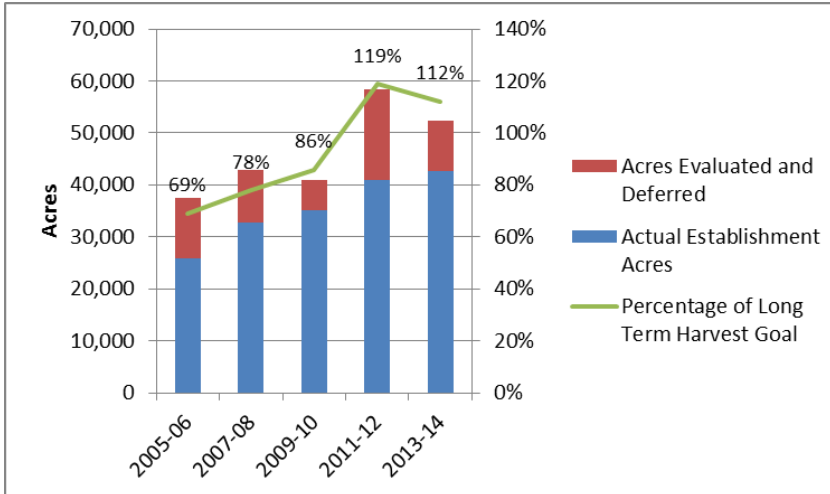
Non-timber issues are a major part of the planning process and include recreation and research.



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

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

Audit Notes:



Auditor: Recent harvest levels have exceeded the Long Term Harvest as the DNR works to liquidate over mature aspen and deal with the EAB and beech bark disease.

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

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

Audit Notes: The WisFIRS system (Wisconsin Forest Inventory and Reporting System) is developed and maintained to house forest inventory from all state lands.

The DNR uses area regulation to determine sustainable harvest levels. See 1.1.4 for a description of the forestry inventory system.

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

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

Audit Notes: Wisconsin Act 166 (2005) requires the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to report biennially to the Council on Forestry the total timber harvest on state lands. Further, it requires DNR to establish an annual allowable timber harvest for these same properties or groups of properties. Further, it requires DNR to maintain a current inventory (recon) of forest resources on state forested lands.

The US Forest Service’s FIA plots system is used to provide growth data; for the state forest system there are additional plots which provide for more detailed analysis and more precise information. Report shares data about state forests: The baseline report for the first five years of the Continuous Forest Inventory highlights the conditions of ten Wisconsin DNR state forests based on a plot inventory system, similar to the USDA Forest Service’s Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program. The CFI contains 3,000 plots and is approaching the end of its first 5 year cycle.

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

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

Audit Notes: The WisFIRS system is used to document forest practices.

## Performance Measure 1.2

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

**Note:** Requirement is new or significantly revised. Transition rules apply until December 31, 2015.

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

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

**Note:** Requirement is new or significantly revised. Transition rules apply until December 31, 2015.

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

Audit Notes: All proposed type conversions consider potential impacts on rare and ecologically important communities at the landscape and forest stand levels. Documentation is found in property plans and timber sale proposals (form 2460-1).

The department’s Silviculture Handbook (HB24315) lays out broad guidance for the consideration forest type conversion based on ecological capacity, social and economic factors, stand conditions, and plan objectives.

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

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

**Note:** Requirement is new or significantly revised. Transition rules apply until December 31, 2015.

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

Audit Notes: The department maintains an Old Growth and Old Forests handbook (HB24805).

Wisconsin’s Wildlife Action Plan identifies rare and sensitive communities and potential management actions.

The department maintains the state Natural Heritage Inventory that informs specific management actions and potential impacts on sensitive species; specific species guidance documents have been developed for species that are most likely to be impacted by forest management.

Special sites including archaeological and culturally significant features are identified and protected; see the Timber Sale Handbook (HB2461).

**Performance Measure 1.3**

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

Indicator:

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

**Note:** Requirement is new or significantly revised. Transition rules apply until December 31, 2015.

N/A     Conformance     Exceeds     O.F.I.     Major NC     Minor NC     Transitional NC

Audit Notes: Administrative sites other areas managed for intensive non-forest purposes (e.g. nurseries, fish hatcheries, intensive recreation developments, fire towers, boat landings, Rib Mountain ski lease, etc. are excluded from forest certification.

Some harvests are targeted at ecological restoration (e.g. barrens, savannas and grasslands). These areas are aligned with property plans, wildlife management and landscape ecological restoration or maintenance goals and are included in the department's certificates.

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## Objective 2 Forest Health and Productivity

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

### Performance Measure 2.1

*Program Participants* shall promptly reforest after final harvest.

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: WisFIRS System is maintained for foresters to schedule reforestation; sites are promptly reforested.

Regional ecological impacts of reforestation or afforestation are discussed as part of the master planning or Interim Forest Management Plan (IFMP) process.

Ecological plans for reforestation are bounded by the master plans; reforestation projects are discussed at annual integrated property meetings to assure that proposed reforestation meets property objectives.

Foresters and property managers carefully review every harvest with respect to invasive plants and possible regeneration concerns. In some cases, such as when this option is within silvicultural guidelines, regeneration treatments are delayed due in part to the widespread extent of invasives in the southern portion of the state. However when regeneration is needed the Wisconsin DNR expends the resources necessary to achieve regeneration, sometimes at great cost.

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

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

Audit Notes: Regeneration guidelines are species specific and are outlined in the Silviculture Handbook. DNR Foresters are instructed to code the stand and flag it for re-visit if they believe that natural regeneration may not be successful.

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

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

Audit Notes: None planted.

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed by field observations. Much of the harvesting is done by experienced loggers using mechanized harvesting equipment. Felling of selected timber is mostly by processors, although hand-felling is not uncommon for the largest trees. Workers doing hand felling have chain saw training which includes directional felling techniques. In some cases sales are set up with requirements for fixed-head processors, allowing the trees to be moved away from the advanced natural regeneration before they are allowed to fall to the ground. Yarding (forwarding) trails are planned, well-spaced, and reasonably narrow, further limiting damage to regeneration. Some sales contract restricts

pole skidding or have winter-only restrictions to help protect natural regeneration from yarding damage.

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

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

Audit Notes: Afforestation is done on old fields and local species are used.

**Performance Measure 2.2**

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: The Pesticide 2014\_FSC spreadsheet indicates chemicals used and application rates. Review of the list did not identify any issues.

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

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

Audit Notes: The Pesticide 2014\_FSC spreadsheet indicates chemicals used and application rates. Review of the list did not identify any issues.

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

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

Audit Notes: The Pesticide 2014\_FSC spreadsheet indicates chemicals used and application rates. Review of the list did not identify any issues.

The Department has extensive guidance in Manual codes and handbooks for chemical use, and reporting. The Department has formed a Pesticide Use Team to address issues with approval, reporting and training. DNR has an intranet site to guide DNR staff in the proper use of chemicals. Review of all chemical use for compliance (pesticide use reporting system) annually with follow-up as warranted. The Pesticide Use Team continues to address the improvement of the systems for pesticide approval, use, and reporting including training for staff and supervisors.

Site visits did not identify any herbicide application issues.

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

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

Audit Notes: WIDNR's guidance document, FSC Highly Hazardous Pesticides and SFI Prohibited Pesticides prohibits the use of these type pesticides and specifically name this requirement.

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

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

Audit Notes: WIDNR's guidance document, FSC Highly Hazardous Pesticides prohibits the use of these type pesticides and specifically name this requirement.

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2.2.6. Use of *integrated pest management* where feasible.

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

Audit Notes: WIDNR has pest management plans for the gypsy moth, emerald ash borer, beech bark disease.

IPM is the approach taken in this program, as documented in the plans: "Integrated pest management for the purpose of this Plan, is defined as follows: The maintenance of destructive agents, including insects, at tolerable levels, by the planned use of a variety of preventive, suppressive, or regulatory tactics and strategies that are ecologically and economically efficient and socially acceptable."

Stands are regularly assessed formally (RECON) and informally for presence of insects or diseases, and treatments are applied in a timely manner before outbreaks widen. The initial treatment approach is commonly salvage or sanitation.

Conventional forest management, through stocking control and use of moderately short rotations, is designed to maintain healthy stands so as to minimize the need for chemical treatments. Stands visited were generally healthy and vigorous. Chemicals are only applied to address problems that can't be resolved in other ways. For example release using brush saws is considered before chemical release is prescribed.

For projects which include elements of site restoration and/or invasive control the practices employed also include blends of mechanical, fire, and chemical approaches. Through interviews it was apparent that managers are seeking approaches that minimize chemical use, but more work remains in many cases to find cost-effective and minimal-chemical approaches.

Extent and rates of applications as documented in written records reviewed were consistent with an integrated approach, in that the use is modest when the nature and extent of the certified land base is considered.

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

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

Audit Notes: DNR personnel interviewed involved in chemical applications provided evidence for how this requirement is met, including documentation of certification (cards) and use of certified contractors in all cases for restricted use chemicals, and use of certified applicators supervising employees who are not certified in some cases. Many work units report that all employees applying even general use pesticides have certification.

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Many of these techniques are required by law or regulation, and/or are specified in contracts for treatment. Shops were reviewed for chemical storage (Devil’s Lake State Park, Buckhorn, others). Handout /training aid: “Posting Requirement for Pesticide Applications” featured guidelines and examples, as well as sources for signs. In describing chemical applications field personnel often mentioned several of the listed chemical BMPs without prompting by auditors. In other cases auditors interviewed field personnel specifically about procedures and methods; in all such cases the responses indicated proper techniques.

### Performance Measure 2.3

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Soil maps are contained in the WisFIRS system and are used in planning timber sales and other treatments. Foresters, biologists, and ecologists demonstrated strong knowledge of the soils, landforms, and bio-physical characteristics of lands in their units. Soils information is included in the sale narratives.

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

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

Audit Notes: Training in BMPs for water quality for field staff; staffs are trained. BMP monitoring on state lands was performed during the fall of 2013. BMP implementation monitoring addresses road construction and soil protection. Foresters, often supported by property managers from other disciplines, use soil and topographic maps, habitat type classifications, and/or field reviews as appropriate to identify soils vulnerable to compaction and use a variety of methods to avoid excessive soil disturbance, including designation of harvesting only with frozen ground or very dry conditions for all or a portion of a harvest area. Review of logging contracts, sale narratives, prospectuses, etc. document these measures. Confirmed by field observations the use of appropriate methods to avoid excessive soil disturbance, as soils in post-harvest stands showed quite limited and reasonable levels of soil compaction and disturbance.

Foresters are trained in equipment impacts on soils and skid road layout.

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed by field observations. Volumes of post-harvest woody debris were consistent with soil protection and productivity; no harvests which included removal of tops and small branches for biomass were observed.

Biomass harvesting guidelines address sensitive soils issues. Revised biomass BMPs were published by the department in 2014.

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

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

Audit Notes: The Silviculture handbook documents guidelines for tree retention in the various harvesting systems; site preparation is also addressed.

Field observations confirmed the retention of vigorous trees and the appropriate application of silviculture guidelines for removal of least vigorous and poorest quality trees and retention of the trees best adapted to the site. For conventional silviculture foresters consistently emphasized the retention of the most vigorous trees when marking stands; results of partial harvests were very good. For restoration-oriented harvests the retained trees met the ecological and biological goals (as appropriate), even if some of these trees were decidedly of poor form and vigor.

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

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

Audit Notes: Wisconsin State BMPs for Water Quality (avoid excessive rutting) and Wisconsin DNR and/or individual county policies (defining excessive rutting) provide these criteria. Confirmed that “excessive rutting” definitions are in the many recent timber sale contracts that were reviewed.

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

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

Audit Notes: There is little construction of new permanent roads in the units visited. Loading decks, skid roads and trails on sales observed were planned in advance, with efforts to locate the main trails in the most appropriate locations and to space secondary trails widely to minimize impacts to soils and to maintain maximum practical distances from wetlands and watercourses to allow for natural filtering for any erosion that might occur. The impacts on recreation trails by skid roads and trails are clearly a consideration during sale planning and implementation.

Foresters are trained in equipment impacts on soils and skid road layout.

**Performance Measure 2.4**

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

Indicators:

2.4.1. *Program* to protect forests from damaging agents.

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

Audit Notes: WIDNR website has a section on damaging agents that describes the agent’s life span and how to treat them. Invasive exotic plants inventory and management systems are being developed to implement new invasive exotic species laws (NR40). Revisions to the NR40 list were adopted in 2015. A statewide invasive species strategic plan was approved in 2013. The Department has an invasive species team that is working to implement NR40.

Wisconsin DNR employs forest health specialists and makes their services readily available to the field units. Pest updates are published quarterly.

Harvest site visits confirm the DNR is actively managing for EAB, beach bark disease and oak wilt.



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

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

Audit Notes: WIDNR website has a section on damaging agents that includes silvicultural guidelines.

For conventional forest management goals, rotations are set short enough to prevent many pest problems (for example Jack Pine rotations of 50 years or Aspen rotations between 40 and 50 years). Forest management, through stocking control and use of moderately short rotations, is designed to maintaining healthy stands. Planting and partial harvest systems consider soil/site conditions before making decisions as to which species to plant or to favor in partial harvests.

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

IDNR     Conformance     Exceeds     O.F.I.     Major NC     Minor NC

Audit Notes: The DNR works with other agencies to educate the public about pest prevention and continually conducts pest surveys. WI Dept. Ag, USDA Aphis and Forest Service, County park and forest programs and extension programs.

The Department has an exemplary program across Bureaus to manage, control and eradicate invasive species.

The DNR has a full service fire prevention program including wildfire equipment and trained personnel. It also works with local fire departments as cooperators.

The DNR issues prescribed burning permits throughout the state.

**Performance Measure 2.5**

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

Indicator:

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

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

Audit Notes: WIDNR has a seed orchard that uses improved planting stock and doesn't use varietal seedlings; only local species are grown.

The department's Tree Improvement Specialist position has been vacant for several years, however tree improvement program responsibilities have been covered through collaboration between nursery managers and the UW-Madison experts. The department has resized its nursery program from three to one state nursery to match demand for planting stock.

### Objective 3 Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources

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

#### Performance Measure 3.1

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: The Division of Forestry maintains a BMPs for Water Quality program, which includes training and monitoring. State lands BMPs monitoring field monitoring was performed during the fall of 2014.

A variety of forms and systems are used to manage the harvesting process from planning through final inspection and sale closeout, including pre-harvest contractor meetings and interim inspection forms. BMPs are covered within many of these documents and are required by the logging contract. All jobs are planned and supervised by licensed foresters, and operated by trained loggers.

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

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

Audit Notes: Contract provisions that specify conformance to best management practices were found in the timber sale contracts.

3.1.3. Monitoring of overall *best management practices* implementation.

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

Audit Notes:

- The Division of Forestry maintains a BMPs for Water Quality program, which includes training and monitoring.
- State lands BMPs monitoring field monitoring was performed during the fall of 2013.
- Timber sale contracts contain provisions for conformance to BMPs and no BMP related issues were identified on any of the harvest sites visited.

#### Performance Measure 3.2

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: The Division of Forestry maintains a program for implementing BMPs for Water Quality that includes training and monitoring. Confirmed that this program continues to operate effectively by reviews of completed and partially completed timber harvests and road and trail improvement efforts. Water quality considerations including lakes or rivers potentially affected by the harvest are documented for each proposed harvest on a Form 2460-001 “Timber

Sale Notice and Cutting Report” and this information is reflected in the harvesting requirements within the timber sale contracts. Sale and/or harvest unit boundaries are designed to avoid or buffer wetlands, stream, lakes, and other water bodies. Riparian buffers associated with harvests are shown on maps and marked on the ground.

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

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

Audit Notes: Streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones are mapped, and are marked on the ground (red paint on trees) near harvests as appropriate.

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

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

Audit Notes: Pre planning and ongoing harvest inspections and documentation. The Timber Sale and Cutting Report has water quality and ecological consideration.

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

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

Audit Notes: Sensitive soils and wet weather restrictions are addressed in timber sale planning, contracting, and sale administration.

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## Objective 4 Conservation of Biological Diversity

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

### Performance Measure 4.1

Program Participants shall conserve biological diversity.

Indicators: See Conservation planning Document

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

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

Audit Notes: The Department has an exemplary program across Bureaus to maintain and improve native biological diversity including prairie and grassland establishment and management.

DNR maintains a comprehensive program to conserve native biological diversity that includes inventory of stand and landscape level biodiversity features by trained professionals, biodiversity-related research by staff and in collaboration with academic institutions and other partners, a statewide Wildlife Action Plan that includes plans to manage species of greatest conservation need, and conservation of important areas of biological diversity through a system of parks, state forests, and natural areas.

Auditor: Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: Silviculture handbook and retention requirements.

Retention of stand-level wildlife habitat elements is guided by several documents that include specific criteria and practices for foresters to follow. Chapter 3 of the Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines (PUB-FR-226 2011), for example, contains specific guidelines for retaining trees and snags, coarse woody debris, conifers in hardwood-dominated landscapes, mast, and ephemeral pools. WDNR's Silvicultural Handbook also includes specific criteria for conserving stand-level wildlife elements. The Public Forest Lands Handbook includes guidelines for implementing the Forest Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program, which includes specific stand-level projects such as identification, selection, and management of snag, den, nest, or rendezvous sites. As a final example, the WDNR's Old-growth and Old Forests Handbook contains criteria and implementation practices for retaining wildlife habitat elements specifically associated with late successional and old growth forests. All of these documents are prepared by WDNR professionals with input from academic experts and professionals from partnering organizations. Criteria and implementation practices are kept current and represent the best available scientific information for the region. Foresters, biologists, and ecologists collaborate closely and demonstrate familiarity with these documents and field sites document adherence to the criteria and practices that they contain.

Auditor: Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: Master plans and IFMP address diversity at the landscape level. The SW Grassland NW sands sharp tailed grouse habitat, central grasslands and prairie chicken. FHCV.

DNR's Ecosystem Management Planning Team developed an Ecological Landscapes Handbook (ELH) that guides a program for documenting the diversity of forest types and natural communities at the stand, regional, and landscape levels. The state has been divided into 16 ecological landscapes, or ecoregions, with similar ecology and management opportunities. The ELH contains an assessment of current conditions for the entire state, and for each ecoregion, broken down by dominant natural community type. In addition, the ELH includes an assessment of trends in ecological conditions, including those related to anticipated trends associated with climate change. The ELH also provides a framework for preparing documents for specific ecological landscapes (e.g., Chapter 15, Northern Lake Michigan Coastal Ecological Landscape). These documents contain regionally-specific descriptions of forest types and natural communities that include assessments for current age and size class distributions. Property Master Plans include site-specific information regarding current stand types and natural communities and specific forest management plans describe stand-level size and age class characteristics. Using the information contained in these, and other, documents, WDNR develops specific plans for conserving the full range of age and size classes for the forest types and natural communities native to Wisconsin. In addition, specific programs have been developed for retaining late successional and old growth stands as well as maintaining a component of the landscape in an early successional condition. All of WDNR's programs include partnerships with academic institutions as well as collaboration with partnering organizations, such as The Nature Conservancy.

Auditor: Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: All state forests are covered with Master plans which tie to the ELH and include a biotic inventory. See previous indicator.

Auditor: Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: Wetland habitat restoration activities including the installation of water control structures on the Rowan Creek Fishery Area and French Creek Wildlife Area. Also, during the timber sale recon for of the sales on the Rowan Creek Fishery Area, a blue heron rookery was identified, a significant buffer installed and the area denoted in the GIS database.

DNR has a State Natural Areas Program (NAP) and a Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) designed to specifically address conservation of known sites with viable occurrences of species of concern. In addition to staff based in Madison, the WDNR Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation recently added 8 regionally-based field ecologists to better fulfill the goals and objectives the Department has for identifying and conserving occurrences of rare, threatened, endangered or exemplary species or natural communities.

Auditors: Boatwright & Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: Non-forested wetlands such as bogs, fens, and marshes are addressed as part of the Natural Heritage Inventory and State Natural Areas Program. These features are identified by trained ecologists during statewide, regional (i.e., landscape), property, and stand-level inventories and are protected as natural areas or special management areas. DNR manages an extensive array of natural areas that, among other things, include ecologically significant wetlands, bogs, fens, and marshes. In addition the Ecological Landscapes Handbook process specifically addresses these features. At the property and stand level, ecologists, biologists, and foresters identify and protect smaller wetlands and vernal (ephemeral) pools, as evidenced on multiple occasions during the site visits.

Auditor: Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: DNR has a comprehensive program for identifying, controlling, and monitoring the occurrence of invasive exotic plants and animals that threaten the ecological integrity of the state's ecosystems. See, for example, the Wisconsin Comprehensive Management Plan to Prevent Further Introductions and Control Existing Populations of Aquatic Invasive Species and the periodic Aquatic Invasive Species Progress Reports. The WDNR Silviculture Handbook specifically addresses upland invasive species and field foresters, biologists, and ecologists demonstrated expert knowledge of invasive exotic species management. Many of the field sites, for example, included some element of invasive exotic plants and WDNR staff identified the species and explained how control had been included in the management plan through harvest modification, mechanical or chemical treatment, or requiring pressure-washing logging equipment. The WDNR website contains current information for the public to promote the control of aquatic, terrestrial, and wetland invasive species and the Department maintains a staff of qualified professionals who focus exclusively on invasive species management.

Auditor: Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: WDNR considers the role of natural disturbance regimes in its statewide, landscape, property, and stand management plans and strives to maintain a natural distribution of stand types, age and size classes, and natural communities. Prescribed fire is an active part of the Department's management program and is used to improve wildlife habitat, control invasive species, restore and maintain native plant communities, and reduce wildfire potential. Examples of such efforts include: stimulating prairie grass growth and improving habitat for upland game and waterfowl; creating pockets of open water for waterfowl within cattail marshes (e.g., at Horicon Marsh); improving habitat for upland nesting birds; and helping to preserve grassland and savanna natural communities that were previously dependent on natural fires prior to European settlement. Prescribed burn plans are developed by trained professionals with multi-disciplinary input from ecologists, biologists, and foresters.

Auditor: Thompson

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## Performance Measure 4.2

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

Indicators:

4.2.1. Program to protect threatened and endangered species.

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

Audit Notes: Threatened and endangered species, rare or exemplary natural communities, and Forests with Exceptional Conservation Values are identified by professional ecologists (e.g., from the NHI) and biologists with input from stakeholders that include academics, conservation organizations, and the public. Areas with statewide or regional biodiversity significance are often protected as State Natural Areas and smaller areas are protected by property-specific conservation zones. WDNR has recently added 8 regionally-based ecologists to better facilitate protection of threatened and endangered species.

Auditor: Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: Natural Heritage Inventory Program and State Natural Areas Program encompass all efforts to locate and protect occurrences of critically imperiled and imperiled species and natural communities (i.e., Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value). Such efforts rely on an in-house staff of trained professionals with frequent collaboration with academic experts and regional conservation organizations. Significant sites are protected as State Natural Areas or within property-specific conservation zones. WDNR staff monitor the condition of such sites and develop conservation strategies through publicly-transparent processes that include input from academic experts, conservation organizations, and the public.

Auditor: Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: WDNR has supported academic research designed to define old growth and identify old growth characteristics in Wisconsin's forests as an aid in identifying and conserving late-successional and old growth forests. Assessments of current old growth have been conducted using NHI, FIA, and SNA data. Conservation and management of old-growth is covered by the WDNR's 139-page Old-growth and Old Forests Handbook, which includes definitions of old growth by stand type, descriptions of dynamics of old growth forest, and management recommendations by stand type for old growth forests. Old growth forest conservation efforts are documented, as appropriate in statewide action plans, within property management plans, and in stand-specific forest management plans. WDNR was co-author of the 2015 publication on Accelerating the Development of Old-growth Characteristics in Second-growth Northern Hardwoods (USDA Forest Service Gen. Tech. Report NRS-144).

Auditor: Thompson

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### Performance Measure 4.3

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Ecologically-important sites are identified by WDNR staff (e.g., NHI), often with collaboration with academic experts and experts from regional conservation organizations and members of the public. The NHI maintains a comprehensive database documenting the occurrence of ecologically important sites and this information is available to WDNR ecologists, biologists, and foresters, who receive training in use of the software system.

Auditor: Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: FHCV are not specifically mapped out but are classified as state natural areas, native community areas, wild resource areas and wild wilderness lakes.

Ecologically important sites are mapped (using GPS) and cataloged (in a GIS) by WDNR staff with quality control and assurance by NHI staff at the regional and Madison levels. This information is used to develop management and conservation programs at the statewide, regional (i.e., landscape), property, and stand levels. Planning documents are developed through interdisciplinary programs and transparent public processes. Coordination between ecologists, biologists, and foresters has been enhanced through the recent addition of 8 regionally-based ecologists.

Auditors: Boatwright & Thompson

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**Performance Measure 4.4**

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: WDNR is home to the Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) Program and the State Natural Areas Program, both of which oversee the collection of information on Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value and other sites with notable biodiversity values. NHI collaborates with NatureServe, The Nature Conservancy, other conservation organizations, and academic institutions regarding the identification and mapping of sites with notable biodiversity values. The WDNR also has an active research program, which includes collaboration with other conservation and academic institutions, that generates information related to the identification and conservation of Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value.

Auditor: Thompson

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

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

Audit Notes: The DNR has an active research program (i.e., Wildlife and Forestry Research Section), which often function: through collaboration with non-governmental, governmental, and academic institutions, that contributes research results and field applications into forest management decision-making processes. During fiscal year 2013-2014, for example, WDNR research included work on: white-tailed deer population monitoring; fish, wildlife, and plant genetics; forest trees; the Driftless Area; upland game species; long-term monitoring and



foundational science; fire suppression and management; resource valuation and ecosystem services; fish and wildlife contaminants; restoration ecology; and landscape dynamics. WDNR staff and collaborators are located at 5 research stations, including the Science Operations Center in Madison, Northern Forest Research Unit (Rhinelander), UW-Madison, UW-Stevens Point, and the University of Minnesota. Research information is disseminated throughout WDNR, and to the public, through research publications, popular articles, and trainings. Research staff also contribute to forest management planning processes through the WDNR's interdisciplinary planning program.

Auditor: Thompson

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**Objective 5 Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits**

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

**Performance Measure 5.1**

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

Indicators:

5.1.1. Program to address visual quality management.

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

Audit Notes: The DNR has developed its own aesthetics handbook. It involves assigning class codes to all timber sales as guidance to the foresters. The harvesting form, 2460 has an aesthetics section.

Areas with special visual qualities can be protected through master planning utilizing a land classification of “Scenic Resource Management Area” (NR44.06 (9)). In this zone, timber and other property management is required to be designed, to the extent possible, to minimize visual impacts. All foresters, as part of new forester training, are trained in visual quality management; see the department’s Silviculture Handbook. Department staff, both property managers and foresters, meet with affected neighboring land owners and affected publics to discuss the mitigation of negative visual impacts on a case by case basis. Areas with special visual qualities are identified in property master plans and in the WisFIRS forest reconnaissance system

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

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

Audit Notes: See 5.1.1. Site visits did not identify any aesthetic issues.

**Performance Measure 5.2**

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed by field observations that most clearcuts are small; record review indicates average clearcut size for 2015 is 13 acres.

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

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

Audit Notes: Documentation is maintained in WisFIRs; which also calculates the average annual clearcut size.

**Performance Measure 5.3**

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: WIDNR has an exemplary visual quality process. Green-requirements are not an issue because most of the hardwood cuts are intermediate and the aspen generally meets the height requirement within 1 year.

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

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

Audit Notes: Sale maps and GIS; review of adjacent stands during sale set up.

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

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

Audit Notes: Green-requirements are not an issue because most of the hardwood cuts are intermediate and the aspen generally meets the height requirement within 1 year.

#### Performance Measure 5.4

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

Indicator:

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

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

Audit Notes: The Department provides ample recreational opportunities for the public. Including hunting, trails etc.

Recreation opportunities are implicit to DNR’s mission. State Parks, Wildlife Areas, State Forests, fisheries properties and many other types of state owned forest lands are developed for a variety of developed and primitive recreation experiences. The Natural Resources Board has emphasized opening lands suitable for motorized access and the department is updating its road and trail inventory to identify additional opportunities for motorized public access. The Department has completed the Public Access Lands Atlas and its companion mapping application that is now available online (Public Access Lands Maps - Wisconsin DNR).The atlas highlights the significant increase in public access to Wisconsin lands made possible through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, as well as other lands open to the public for outdoor recreation. The Public Access Lands mapping application is a map-based system that allows you to locate and obtain information on public access properties. The department has developed a number of tools to enable the public to find state lands for specific recreation uses including: collaborated with Pocket Ranger to develop a mobile app, DNR managed lands mobile viewer (in development), dove field locations, mobile apps for fishing regulations, mobile apps for state parks and forests, social media, and parking area identification and signing.

**Objective 6    Protection of Special Sites**

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

**Performance Measure 6.1**

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: NHI and archaeological sites are identified and systems are in place for protection.

DNR has an archaeologist on staff. DNR collaborates closely with the State Historical Society to identify and protect sensitive cultural resources, consults with Wisconsin Indian tribes about information related to tribal historic and cultural sites and has vegetation management guidelines for burial mounds.

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

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

Audit Notes: See 6.1.1. Data bases for cultural and biotic special sites are maintained and updated periodically. Staff often report new locations of ETF species to NHI. Appropriate management practices are employed to protect these sites, but for many sites, the exact location is not revealed. This is especially done for endangered resources and special sites that have cultural significance.

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## Objective 7 Efficient Use of Fiber Resources

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

### Performance Measure 7.1

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

Indicator:

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Utilization standards are specified in contracts. Timber sale administration documents utilization. Forest Products Services program for market development and biomass markets; a statewide staffing strategy has been redefined and expanded to include regional forest products services specialists. BMP's for biomass harvesting have been developed and implemented; revised guidelines published in 2014.

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**Objective 8 Recognize and Respect *Indigenous Peoples'* Rights**

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

**Performance Measure 8.1**

Program Participants shall recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights.

Indicator:

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

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

Audit Notes: Executive Order #39 directs all state agencies to recognize and consult with Indian Tribes located in Wisconsin on a government to government basis.  
Policy signed in 2005 was established by the DNR directing staff on consultation with Wisconsin's Indian Tribes. This policy recognizes the unique relationship between both governments, and is meant to respect each government.

**Performance Measure 8.2**

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

Indicator:

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

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

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

Audit Notes: DNR has 11 tribes with interests (non-forest products and hunting and fishing) in State Lands and has created the Tribal Liaison position in Madison and has assigned foresters to each tribe.

**Performance Measure 8.3**

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: The department also has a system of individual forestry division tribal liaisons to develop strong communication channels and discuss issues related to forest management including traditional knowledge, important sites, and non-timber forest products on state lands and to respond to tribal inquiries and concerns.

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

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

Audit Notes: The agency tribal liaison also has consistent and continual communication established between the tribal leadership and the department.

## Objective 9 Legal and Regulatory Compliance

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

### Performance Measure 9.1

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

Indicators:

9.1.1. Access to relevant laws and regulations in appropriate locations.

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

Audit Notes: Staff has access to relevant laws, including state statutes and administrative codes using the internet.

The Department maintains an intranet that houses manual codes and handbooks for all Department programs.

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

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

Audit Notes: Wisconsin DNR employs an attorney to review key aspects of all programs and major actions.

Professional foresters plan all projects, often with review by specialists from other disciplines. Regulations and laws are part of the professional training of these planners/reviewers.

Experienced foresters employed by WDNR review and approve most projects, and legal/regulatory compliance is part of these reviews.

All harvests are planned and supervised by trained foresters, and operated by trained loggers.

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

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

Audit Notes: Senior managers for the Division of Lands and for the Division of Forestry report no regulatory compliance issues over the past several years.

In 2015 a new department manual code, MC1755.1, was developed to help assure that DNR projects utilize the same application, review, and approval process as external projects for actions requiring self-permitting.

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### Performance Measure 9.2

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed by review of the employee webpage that DNR is committed.

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

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

Audit Notes: State of Wisconsin labor laws respect the intent of the International Labor Organization (ILO) core conventions (see Office of State Employee Relations). No ILO-related complaints received by state lands.

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## Objective 10 Forestry Research, Science and Technology

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

### Performance Measure 10.1

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: DNR funds research (internal and external) on a broad range of issues: forest health, chemical efficiency, water quality, wildlife management, conservation, social issues, energy efficiency, forest operations, etc. The Department develops a forestry research agenda with the Wisconsin Council on Forestry and partners.

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

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

Audit Notes: None being done directly by Wisconsin DNR. Some funding of U.W. for nursery/genetics research.

### Performance Measure 10.2

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

Indicator:

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

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

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

Audit Notes:

- The WDNR Forest Certification Coordinator is a SFI SIC representative.
- The department has a forest inventory analyst responsible for Forest Inventory Analysis based growth and Drain in cooperation with the USDA forest service. The department also collaborates with USFS on an Urban forest inventory.
- The department maintains a CFI system for state forests.
- The department leads periodic BMP monitoring in collaboration with many SFI SIC members.
- The department collaborates with the development of biodiversity conservation information for all Landowners and various social, cultural and economic assessments.

**Performance Measure 10.3**

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: WICCI was established in 2007 as a collaboration between the UW-Madison Nelson Institute and the department

Participation in WICCI and distribution of working group reports.

Climate change impacts consideration in the master planning process.

Development of adaptation strategies including brook trout management impacts.

Natural Heritage Conservation climate change and plant community work groups.

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

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

Audit Notes: WICCI was established in 2007 as a collaboration between the UW-Madison Nelson Institute and the department

Participation in WICCI and distribution of working group reports.

Climate change impacts consideration in the master planning process.

Development of adaptation strategies including brook trout management impacts.

Natural Heritage Conservation climate change and plant community work groups.

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## Objective 11 Training and Education

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

### Performance Measure 11.1

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed by review of email dated 8/7/20125 from Mark Heyde.

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

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

Audit Notes: An ICIT team composed of members of both Forestry and Lands Divisions, with representatives of all of the bureaus involved, helps ensure that roles are understood. Every state employee involved in the audit clearly understood their certification responsibilities.

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

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

Audit Notes: Lead auditor requested evidence of the education and training for selected WDNR personnel across the range of agencies who were involved in the audit. Training records indicated that employees obtain varied training, ranging from agency-provided meetings up to major conferences and even college-level courses. Interviews with professional staff showed most had 4-year degrees and many have advanced degrees in relevant natural resources fields

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

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

Audit Notes: Interviews with timber sale administrators indicate they expect a trained person with on-site responsibility. They check the training status on-line.

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

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

Audit Notes: WDNR supports the Master logger program and the SFI SIC FISTA program.

### Performance Measure 11.2

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

Indicators:

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed considerable involvement in the Wisconsin SFI Implementation Committee, including DNR researchers conducting research on biomass harvesting to develop a visual handbook, a grant for the Master Logger program in July 2014 and by Mark's participation in the WI SIC. WIDNR foresters also instruct FISTA training programs.

Confirmed Mark Heyde attended 3 of 4 meetings since the last audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: The FISTA training has a 4 hour annual training requirement.

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

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

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

Audit Notes: WI has a Master Logger program. Confirmed DNR provided a grant for the Master Logger program in July 2014.

## Objective 12 Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach

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

### Performance Measure 12.1

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed considerable involvement in the Wisconsin SFI Implementation Committee, including DNR researchers conducting research on biomass harvesting to develop a visual handbook, a grant for the Master Logger program in July 2014 and by Mark's participation in the WI SIC. WIDNR foresters also instruct FISTA training programs.

Confirmed Mark Heyde attended 3 of 4 meetings since the last audit.

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed considerable involvement in the Wisconsin SFI Implementation Committee, including DNR researchers conducting research on biomass harvesting to develop a visual handbook, a grant for the Master Logger program in July 2014 and by Mark's participation in the WI SIC. WIDNR foresters also instruct FISTA training programs.

Confirmed Mark Heyde attended 3 of 4 meetings since the last audit.

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

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

Audit Notes: Wisconsin DNR has an active program to purchase conservation easements on working forests and riparian zones, or to buy fee forestland to support working forestry.

There are 1 ½ positions in the Forestry Program for easement acquisition.

Wisconsin DNR Managed Forest Law Program (MFL) is certified under American Tree Farm; which provides current use tax breaks.

**Performance Measure 12.2**

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

Indicator:

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Wisconsin DNR has an extensive program of outreach and landowner education. Confirmed by looking at the various web pages that provide information and which promote workshops, conferences, etc. The field offices have extensive educational materials available to the public.

The Department has regular public outreach efforts including the Wisconsin State Fair, local venues, service clubs, publications, news articles, features, the Natural Resources Magazine.

The Department also has public outreach for wildlife management goals, property master plans, Natural Resources Foundation field tours, etc.

Regional education outreach with other Lake States and the US Forest Service.

**Performance Measure 12.3**

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: This requirement is satisfied by its participation in the WI SIC.

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed by review of the 2014 WI SIC Annual Progress Report.

## Objective 13 **Public Land Management Responsibilities**

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

### Performance Measure 13.1

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Public input opportunities during master planning are superb including: Local outreach to stakeholders and the community level: annual stakeholder meetings, listening sessions, newsletters, integrated property management meetings; outreach is scaled to the public's level of interest and relative risk.

Web information is listed by property.

Interim forest management plan (IFMP) development is offered for public review.

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

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

Audit Notes: See 13.1.1 above. Local stakeholders are asked to comment on Master and Interim Forest plans, all internal guidance formulated by WIDNR and contacts with local governments and landowners.

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## Objective 14 Communications and Public Reporting

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

### Performance Measure 14.1

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

Indicator:

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

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed by review of the SFI Inc. website that the 2014 report is present.

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### Performance Measure 14.2

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed by review of email from Rachel that the report was submitted March 30, 2015.

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

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

Audit Notes: WisFIRs system tracks all harvests; other systems are used to track contributions, etc.

The review of documents associated with selected field sites helped audit team assess recordkeeping. All records requested were provided quickly.

Confirmed by review of Annual Report.

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

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

Audit Notes: Past reports maintained by Mark Heyde.

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## Objective 15 Management Review and Continual Improvement

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

### Performance Measure 15.1

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

Indicators:

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

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

Audit Notes: The department maintains an Integrated Certification Implementation Team (ICIT)

A primary role of ICIT is the review of commitments, programs and procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of SFI standards implementation and reporting to management.

The results of the department’s response to CAR requests as well as the result of internal monitoring are discussed with senior management at the annual review.

The DNR’s Integrated Certification Implementation Team (ICIT) includes a representative from each DNR program. The team meets regularly, as confirmed by ICIT Meeting Minutes from May 6, 2013. “In August 2012 the Forestry and Land Division administrators confirmed that the charge of the Integrated Certification Implementation Team includes:

- a. Coordination of annual certification audits.
- b. Coordinated response to Corrective Action Requests, Observations, and Opportunities for Improvement.
- c. Internal monitoring of DNR policies and procedures related to forest certification.
- d. Annual certification review with senior management.”

Team leaders and Area Foresters and other supervisors work closely with field personnel to ensure that actions meet program guidance, manual codes, scientific principles, and legal requirements, all of which are consistent with the SFI requirements. Most projects require review and sign-off by at least one such supervisory personnel. Interviews confirmed that such managers conduct regular field reviews as well.

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

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

Audit Notes: Confirmed the 2015 internal audit was completed July 2, 2015 and an FSC related CAR for pesticide use was issued.

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

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

Audit Notes: Agenda and memo for DNR’s annual senior management review, July 28, 2015, and the supporting documentation for this management review were the key evidence of conformance with this requirement. The review was structured to focus on issues related to the third-party audit findings from the 2014 audit as well as the 2015 internal audit CAR.

(End)

## **Boatwright Site Notes**

### **Wisconsin DNR 2015 State Lands**

**Tuesday, August 18, 2015**

Mark Heyde	Forest Cert. Coord. Madison DNR
Norman Boatwright	Auditor
Andy Paulios	Property Manager
Rachel McDonald	Staff Specialist
Randy Stampfl	Forester
Steve Holaday	Forester
Nate Fayram	District Ecologist
Nathan Nye	Property Manager
Bruce Henderson	Forester
Joel Green	Forester
Sarah Kehrli	Property Manager

**Site 1: Deansville Wildlife Area - Harvest 1312-02**

Three areas in this sale: 1) Remove of central hdwd trees to promote an oak savannah, 2) Timber stand improvement cut in oak removing undesirable species and aspen and 3) Aspen regen cut. Little damage to residuals and good single tree retention in the aspen cuts.

The Wildlife Area is covered in the Glacier Heritage Area Master Plan and also has share cropped agriculture fields, sunflower fields planted for hunters, an agriculture field converted to hay and designated as a dog training area. Contains a large fen SNA. Good signage along public roads.

**Site 2: Waunakee Wildlife Area - Harvest 1345-1**

Timber stand improvement cut using single tree selection with gaps. Sale not cut. Preharvest invasive treatment included buckthorn, honey suckle and garlic mustard. Good signage along public roads. No Master Plan and the IFMP was appropriate.

**Site 3: Rowan Creek Fishery Area - Harvest 1105-0512**

Red pine final harvest with good red pine group selection. Good oak, maple and white oak regen and planted with white pine and mixed hardwood.

**Site 4: Pine Island Wildlife Area - Harvest 11238-0112**

Aspen regen cut with good oak single tree and ash group retention. The Wildlife Area is part of the 15,000 acre Leopold-Pine Island Important Bird Area consisting of the WIDNR and private landowners working under a common management plan. Rich diversity with over 50 NHI hits on-site.

**Site 5: French Creek Wildlife Area - Harvest 1117-0611**

Timber sale improvement cut to encourage oak regeneration with little damage to residuals. During the initial timber sale recon, a blue heron rockery was identified, buffered and entered into the GIS database as a special place. DNR created a 900 acre wetland by installing a water control structure.

**Site 6: French Creek Wildlife Area - Harvest 1117-0511**

Many sale types: 1) Red pine removal leaving white pine retention, 2) Timber sale improvement cut with little damage to residuals, 3) White pine thin with little damage to residuals, 4) Aspen regen cut with

group retention and 5) Hdwd final harvest leaving oak and hickory to establish a savannah. DNR created a large wetland by installing a water control structure.

**Wednesday August 19, 2015**

Mark Heyde	Forest Cert. Coord. Madison DNR
Norman Boatwright	Auditor
Mark Witecha	Property Manager
Randy Stampfl	Forester
Dave Sample	State Natural Areas Ecologist
Sharene Smith	Real Estate
Sharon Fandel	District Ecologist
Paul Samerdyke	Property Manager
Mike Seiger	Forester

**Site 1 Waterloo Wildlife Area - Harvest (number not provided, Conservation Lane Sale)**

Two harvest types: 1) Thin 50 year old Norway spruce plantation and 2) Aspen regen harvest with oak and cherry retention. Not cut and no issues.

**Site 2 Waterloo Wildlife Area - Harvest (number not provided, Hwy 19 Sale)**

Aspen regen cut leaving oak, hickory walnut and cherry with little damage to residuals.

**Site 3 Mud Lake – Harvest (number not provided, Hwy 19 Sale)**

Three harvest types: 1) Aspen regen, 2) Ash removal and 3) Timber stand improvement cut favoring oak, cherry and hickory. Frozen ground harvest restriction due to Indian mound on-site and no issues.

**Site 4 Mud Lake – Harvest (number not provided, Hubbleton Sale)**

Two types of cuts: 1) White pine final harvest to increase prairie and 2) Aspen regen cut with oak and cherry retention. No issues.

**Site 5 Mud Lake – Harvest (number not provided, Johnson Creek Sale)**

Two types of cuts: 1) Red pine final harvest due to beetle infestation and 2) White pine thin with little damage to residuals.

**Site 6 Rome Pond Wildlife Area - Harvest 2841-01**

Ash removal and hdwd timber sale improvement cut with good stocking and little damage to residuals. A water bar should have been placed on a steep part of the main skid trail.

**Site 7 LuLu Lake State Natural Area – Harvest 6816-1**

4 types of cuts: 1) Norway spruce 1<sup>st</sup> thin – marked, 2) Norway spruce 1<sup>st</sup> thin 3<sup>rd</sup> row, 3) Red pine 1<sup>st</sup> thin 3<sup>rd</sup> row and 4) Red pine final harvest with oak and walnut retention. Good stocking with little residual damage.

**Thursday August 20, 2015**

Mark Heyde	Forest Cert. Coord. Madison DNR
Norman Boatwright	Auditor
Steve Holaday	Forester
Randy Stampfl	Forester
Dave Sample	State Natural Areas Ecologist
Sharon Fandel	District Ecologist

Mark Witecha	Property Manager
Aaron Young	Forester
Nathan Holoubek	Property Manager
Nick Koltz	Forester
Nathan Fayram	District Ecologist

**Site 1 Prince's Point Wildlife Area - Harvest (number not provided, Bottomland Hardwood Sale)**

Ash removal and timber stand improvement cut to encourage oak regen. Not cut and no issues.

**Site 2 Prince's Point Wildlife Area - Harvest (number not provided, Koch Lane Sale)**

Ash removal and timber stand improvement cut. Not cut and no issues.

**Site 3 Avon Bottoms Wildlife Area - Harvest 5406-1**

Hdwd final harvest to encourage the oak savannah cover type with little damage to residuals. Part of the sale area included the Swenson Wet Prairie State Natural Area.

**Site 4 Avon Bottoms Wildlife Area - Harvest 5406-2**

Christmas tree final harvest to establish grassland.

**Site 5 Avon Bottoms Wildlife Area – Hdwd tree planting**

Hdwd tree planting on an 8x8 foot grid under mature ash and mixed bottomland hardwood stand. The objective is to attempt to get some growth on the seedlings before the ash final harvest to get a jump on the Canary grass.

## **Thompson Site Notes**

### **Wisconsin DNR 2015 State Lands**

#### **Monday, August 17, 2015**

Aaron Buchholz, District Land Representative, WDNR

Matt Zine, Conservation Biologist, Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation

Michael Thompson, Auditor

Dan Weidert, Wildlife Biologist

Tom Vanden Elzen, Forester

Natanya Hayden, Property Manager

Andy Noth, Forester

Steve Kaufman, Forester

#### **Site 1: Mullet Creek Wildlife Area – Sale Number 2070-12**

Marked timber sale in bottomland hardwood forest. Even-aged management intermediate thinning with a focus on releasing crop trees. Target residual basal area 90 square feet per acre. Seasonal restrictions (frozen ground) to prevent rutting on wet soils. Reed canary grass is a common invasive and retention of crown cover is intended to discourage the spread of this species. Harvest conducted under an Interim Forest Management Plan.

A nearby parcel is the subject of a minor boundary dispute, which provided an opportunity to discuss how the DNR resolves such issues. If informal discussions fail to resolve the dispute, the DNR retains a surveyor to locate the common boundary. If the landowner is not satisfied with the results of the survey, the County Surveyor is consulted. As a last resort, continuing boundary disputes are settled in court.

#### **Site 2: Killsnake Wildlife Area – Sale Number 834-1**

Completed timber sale with a management objective of regenerating oak (red, white, and bur) through even-aged shelterwood harvest. Supplemental planting is planned for the near-term. Residual basal area averages 34 square feet per acre of large sawtimber (red, white, and bur oak) with red maple, hickory, and basswood also designated as leave trees. Harvest restricted to frozen ground conditions to protect sensitive soils.

#### **Site 3: Collins Marsh Wildlife Area – Sale Number 3622-2**

Completed harvest intended to regenerate aspen and to increase the area of younger forest on the property to, in part, improve habitat for American woodcock. Coppice harvest with reserve trees and a few small reserve islands. Green tree retention included all conifers and marked trees, which included silver maple, bur oak, cottonwood, white cedar, tamarack, aspen, elm, ash, basswood, and hackberry.

#### **Site 4: Collins Marsh Wildlife Area – Sale Number 3622-1**

Partially implemented harvest with one block not cut due to excessively wet soils in swamp hardwoods. The management objective for poletimber was to improve the quality of the crop trees via release on one to three sides, whereas the objective for sawtimber was to improve the quality of the residual stand while also creating gaps for regeneration. The presence of emerald ash borer was taken into consideration during harvest planning (i.e., ash targeted for removal).

**Tuesday, August 18, 2015**

Aaron Buchholz, District Land Representative, WDNR

Matt Zine, Conservation Biologist, Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation

Michael Thompson, Auditor

Kate Lenz, Forestry Staff Specialist

Josh Martinez, Wildlife Biologist

Kelli Bruns, Peninsula State Park

John Lubbers, Forester

Chris Plzak, Forester

Bill Ruff, Forester

Guy Willman, Property Manager

Natanya Hayden, Property Manager

Fred Viste, Park Manager

**Site 1(5): Peninsula State Park – Scotch Pine Treatment**

Peninsula State Park (PSP) has several legacy Scotch pine (i.e., Scots pine) plantings that are scheduled within the Master Plan for being transitioned back to a natural species composition. Since original planting (time uncertain), the stands have not been managed and function as natural stands, despite the non-native dominant species. Due to the high public use of PSP, removal of Scotch pine is planned for the window between the end of Fall and the beginning of the winter recreation period to minimize viewer impacts.

**Site 2(6): Peninsula State Park – Scotch Pine Treatment**

Similar to the previous site, but in this case the stand is being thinned to minimize the visual impact of the harvest on Park users. Advance regeneration of native species will be promoted to encourage the gradual transition back to natural stand conditions.

**Site 3(7): Mud Lake Wildlife Area**

Aspen regeneration through coppice harvesting on four small units. The area had previously been a State Natural Area, but was changed to a Wildlife Area in 2010 to better suit the management objectives for the property. Most blocks are too small for green tree retention, but the one 14-acre block has two islands that total approximately 2 acres. Harvest will be conducted on frozen ground to protect soils.

**Site 4(8): Whitefish Dunes State Park – Sale Number 2**

Completed beech harvest within 75 feet of public trails as a preventative safety measure due to the imminent loss of trees to emerald ash borer. Harvest conducted in a manner that minimized visual impacts to the visiting public. No invasive species noted during planning process, but significant numbers of thistle observed in roadside portions of the harvest block.

**Site 5(9): Point Beach State Forest – Sale Number 3672-2**

Planned harvest at a State Forest with significant recreational use. Management objective is to salvage declining aspen and birch, with the intent to increase the aspen component, to improve the quality of red pine, to reduce non-native

Scotch pine, and to harvest mature jack pine. Aspen and birch retained in green tree retention areas. Sale planned for frozen ground conditions and to avoid the 9-day gun deer season.

**Wednesday, August 19, 2015**

Aaron Buchholz, District Land Representative, WDNR

Matt Zine, Conservation Biologist, Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation

Michael Thompson, Auditor

Carolyn Morgen, Park Superintendent

Adam Zirbel, Forester

Julie Peltier, Forestry

Dan Weidert, Wildlife Biologist

Tom Vanden Elzen, Forester

Clint Gilman, Forester

Jason Quast, Superintendent

Jeff Weatherly, Forestry

**Site 1(10): Kohler-Andrae State Park – Sale Number 1**

Ash removal in designated public-use areas as a safety precaution due to emerald ash borer. Ash to be removed meet three criteria: 1) greater than 5" dbh, 2) potential to fall across campsites, roads, or other use areas, and 3) within reach of harvesting equipment from roads or campsite pads. Ash stumps treated with triclopyr.

**Site 2(11): Kohler-Andrae State Park**

Thinning in a 13-acre planted stand that includes red pine, white pine, and Norway spruce. Current basal area 240 square feet per acre and residual stand is 144 square feet per acre. Dry or frozen ground skidding only. Triclopyr to be used to control Japanese barberry.

**Site 3(12): Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit – Sale Number 132**

Ash tree removal in response to emerald ash borer at Mauthe Lake Recreation Area. Ash to be removed meet three criteria: 1) greater than 5" dbh, 2) potential to fall across campsites, roads, or other use areas, and 3) within reach of harvesting equipment from roads or campsite pads.

**Site 4(13): Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit – Sale Number 136**

Harvest planned for one red pine and one white pine stand and a thinning of one red pine and one spruce stand. Harvest blocks are intended, where possible, to convert to native hardwoods using advance regeneration and planting, depending on site conditions. Norway spruce is present in moderate amounts. Due to the size of the blocks, green tree retention elements were included in harvest plans. Much of the area includes invasive species, such as buckthorn, garlic mustard, honeysuckle, autumn olive, and Japanese barberry, much of which controlled through mechanical mowing and then spraying with herbicides.

**Site 5(14): Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit – "Over the Hill" Sale**

Initial entry to thin northern hardwoods stand dominated by red oak, sugar maple, and ash. Free thinning to control spacing and density while favoring crop trees. Combination of low and high thinning to achieve residual basal area of 90-100 square feet per acre. Cross-country ski trails and hiking trails pass through a section of the sale and were buffered from intensive management.

**Site 6(15): Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit – Sale Number 134**

Completed sale of four planted stands that included white pine, red pine and Norway spruce (one stand). Management objectives in the red and white pine stands is to restore them to northern hardwoods due to the decline of the pine. The management objective for the Norway spruce stand is to convert to native hardwoods. Green tree retention elements employed throughout the sale blocks. Garlon 4/Element 4 to be sprayed to control buckthorn and Escort will be used on Japanese barberry and honeysuckle. Oust to be used to control garlic mustard.

**Thursday, August 20, 2015**

Aaron Buchholz, District Land Representative, WDNR

Matt Zine, Conservation Biologist, Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation

Michael Thompson, Auditor

Jason Quast, Property Manager

Adam Zirbel, Forester

Julie Peltier, Forestry

Clint Gilman, Forestry

Dan Weidert, Wildlife Biologist

Paul Samerdyke, Property Manager

Randy Stampfl, Forester

**Site 1(16): Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit – Sale Number 131**

Completed sale for an initial entry thinning to promote tree health and vigor in oak and northern hardwood stand types. Initial stocking ranged from 95 to 152 square feet per acre and residual stocking was 84 to 103 square feet per acre. Escort used to control Japanese barberry. The Ice Age Recreational Trail runs through a portion of the block and was buffered from intensive management.

**Site 2(17): Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit – “Old Phone Pole Sale”**

The management objective for this proposed sale in an oak stand is an initial thinning to control stand density and structure while promoting the health of the residual stand. Much of the oak is in decline and this stand will gradually convert to northern hardwoods. Uneven-aged management using single-tree and group selection free thinning is the proposed silvicultural system. Garlon 3A will be used to control Japanese barberry.

**Site 3(18): Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit – Sale Number 137**

Completed sale in red pine, white pine, and northern hardwood planting blocks. The management objectives for the planted stands are to reduce density to promote vigor in the residual stand and to convert planted pines to northern hardwoods. Even-age thinning based on basal area control was used. Single tree selection (low thinning) was also used to release crop red and white pines as well as native hardwoods. Scattered red and white pines left as green tree retention. Buckthorn treated with Garlon; Escort used for honeysuckle and Japanese barberry; and Oust used to treat garlic mustard.

**Site 4(19): Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area – “Horicon East Timber Sale”**

Variable block being treated, primarily, with thinning. Small patches of aspen are being regenerated for their wildlife value. A small band of bottomland hardwoods are being converted to grasslands as part of waterfowl management



efforts associated with Horicon Marsh. Oak, hickory, walnut, cherry, and hackberry left in clearcut blocks as green tree retention. Herbicides will be used on stumps in areas being converted to grasslands.

## **Grady Site Notes**

### **Wisconsin DNR 2015 State Lands**

#### **Monday, August 17, 2015**

Site 1: Observatory Hill State Natural Area – tract #101-12

RJ Wickham – Forestry Team Leader

Scott Sullivan – Forester

John Robaidek – Ecologist, Property Manager

Scott Koerner – Koerner Forest Products (Logging contractor for this site)

Harvest in a stand-alone State Natural Area (SNA). SNA is the highest point in the county, and provides a panoramic lookout. Has historic value as an early childhood haunt of John Muir, who grew up nearby. The hill also contains rhyolite outcroppings with pre-historic petroglyphs. These areas are excluded from the timber sale. Harvest conducted under an Interim Forest Management plan.

Harvest goal is restoration to an oak savannah type. Will focus on mixed hardwood removal, with a small pine thinning area. Minor, but acceptable amount of damage on residual trees so far, although the sale was still in progress. Harvest had begun but was shut down due to updated seasonal restrictions on guidance Cerulean Warbler (see Obs. 2015.2 for details).

Site 2: Plainfield Tunnel Lakes State Natural Area – sale # 7020-102

Jason Hennes – Forestry Tech, (Sale Administrator)

Mackenzie Siglinsky – Forester

Jon Robaidek – Ecologist, Property Manager

Stand alone SNA that was created primarily to focus on conservation of Fassett's locoweed, a threatened plant found in the fluctuating shores of the Plainfield Lakes. Harvest in the SNA focused on thinning of legacy planted red pine stands that existed when DNR acquired the property. Harvest areas are geographically separate from the lakes which are the focus of the SNA. Two distinct harvest units, one unit a first thinning with every third row removed. Second unit was a second thinning focusing on removing marked trees with poor vigor trees down to a set basal area. Additional pocket decline from Annosum resulted in a group being removed. Portion of the property outside the SNA is being considered for sale under a DNR program to dispose of 10,000 acres statewide and consolidate their holdings within project boundaries.

#### **Tuesday, August 18, 2015**

Site 1: White River Fishery Area – T&C Sale # 7014-92

Jake Fries – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager

Andrew Komassa – Weekly Timber and Pulp (Logging Contractor for this site)

Jason Hennes – Forestry Technician (Sale Administrator)

Area use is primarily for fishing and hunting. Trout unlimited has done in stream habitat improvement for fish populations.

Oak, jack pine, and aspen regeneration harvest. Operations were frozen ground only due to proximity to white river. Aspen regeneration area adjacent to river with 15' buffer zone. Review of chain of custody procedures.

Site2: Mekan River Fishery Area

In stream restoration projects for trout. Installation of rip rap and pilings in order to restore depth to the stream and improve fish passage.

Mekan River is an extensive fishery area with disparate properties spread over two counties. Fishing and hunting are primary use, along with recreational use of the Ice Age Trail that passes through the property. Harvesting conducted under an Interim Forest Management plan.

Site 3: Mekan River Fishery Area – Gypsy Moth Sale # 7059-93

Jim Holzwart – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager  
Ellen Barth – Area Wildlife Supervisor  
Jason Hennes – Forestry Technician (Sale Administrator)  
R.J. Wickham – Forestry Team Leader

Two cutting units, oak regeneration harvest, red pine first thinning. Recreational considerations as Ice Age trail runs through harvest area. Discussed accommodations for trail, work with local trail clubs. Unit is close to the Mekan river, but the sale boundaries were sufficiently removed from the banks that separate buffers were not required. Green tree retention clumps in the regeneration unit.

Site 4: Mekan River Fishery Area – Mekan Headwaters Sale #7059-105

Pete Johnson – AAA Hardwoods  
Jim Holzwart – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager  
Jon Robaidek – Ecologist, Property Manager  
Jason Hennes – Forestry Technician (Sale Administrator)

Several different treatment areas spread over a large area of the property, including regeneration harvest, pine thinning, and invasive locust removal. Sale harvest area is near embedded SNA Mekan Springs. Active bald eagle nest discovered during recon for the sale, resulted in seasonal restrictions and reduction in harvest intensity around the nest (no overstory removal, harvest will focus on locust removal only within buffer zone). Ice age trail runs through the sale, with accompanying equipment exclusion zone.

Public interest in the sale has been high due to the proximity to the Mekan Springs, and relatively long period of time since previous harvesting in this area. DNR has held public meetings and done outreach to interested parties. Original planned harvest area was 300 acres, now closer to 100 based on different considerations taken into account as part of planning.

Site #5 Cougar sale #7059-94

Jim Holzwart – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager  
Jason Hennes – Forestry Technician (Sale Administrator)  
R.J. Wickham – Forestry Team Leader

Regeneration harvest, pine thinning, jack pine removal. Ice age trail runs through the sale area. Harvest is in upland area, although Chaffee Creek runs just south of the harvest. Goal of the harvest is to enhance wet mesic prairie species close to the creek.

Site #6 Chaffee Creek Headwaters sale #7059-90  
Jim Holzwart – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager  
Jason Hennes – Forestry Technician (Sale Administrator)  
R.J. Wickham – Forestry Team Leader

84 acres of pine thinning of former Christmas tree plantation area, mix of first and second thinning. Pine stands showed poor vigor and form that the thinning attempted to eliminate. Additional 29 acres of oak regeneration harvest.

### **Wednesday August 19<sup>th</sup>**

Review at Wautoma office of WisFIRS, DNR database and harvest planning tools.

Site #1 Mecan River Fishery Area Mecan Camp Sale # 3969-98  
Jim Holzwart – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager  
Scott Sullivan – Forester (Sale Administrator)

Oak regeneration harvest with retention islands. Reserved wetland islands within the harvest unit as well. Selective pine thinning. Harvest conducted during fall/winter. Strong regeneration. Large black locust area, which had been treated with mechanical and chemical control.

Site #2 Grand River Wildlife Area – Dam Road sale #2465-1  
Jim Holzwart – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager  
Scott Sullivan – Forester (Sale Administrator)

Grand River Wildlife Area is a 7,000 acre property featuring a large flowage. A dam was installed in 1969 that allows the DNR to manipulate water levels in order to maintain a variety of waterfowl habitat and wetland restoration. There are also upland prairie and oak savannah areas which are maintained for songbird habitat as well as upland nesting for waterfowl (and deer). Goal of timber harvests in the area is a return to oak savannah systems. Property also has significant agricultural activity in the form of sharecropping with private farmers (outside the scope of this certificate). These areas are also planned to be replanted in prairie species over the long-term.

Harvest was primary a shelterwood cut, removal of variety of hardwood species. Small pine stand received a second thinning, and an old pine windbreak was removed in order to maintain restored prairie habitat. Lupine was present in the prairie area, but the property is not in a county where karner blue butterfly restrictions would have been put in place. Harvesting allowed during frozen ground only. Sale was stopped at one point due to wet ground, although rutting was not observed.

Review of duck banding procedures and duck banding station. DNR conducts banding as part of nationwide waterfowl population survey and monitoring.

Site #3 Grand River Wildlife Area – Grand River sale #2465-2  
Jim Holzwart – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager

Scott Sullivan – Forester

Harvest plan spread over four different units on the periphery of the wildlife area. Primary harvest units were oak harvest areas aimed at converting to oak woodland. Second harvest unit is an aspen coppice harvest area. Third is a mixed deciduous planting area, also being converted to oak woodland. Planted area had a variety of species planted before DNR acquired the property, and their harvesting goals now are to return it to a more natural composition to complement the wildlife area.

Harvest units are adjacent to county roads, and timber theft is a concern (particularly firewood cutters). Security cameras were set up near landings. Discussed safety concerns and signage related to active harvests near high traffic public roads.

#### **Thursday August 20<sup>th</sup>**

Site #1 Rat River Wildlife Area – Tract #1-14

Tom Vanden Elzen – Forester

Bryan Woodbury – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager

Wildlife area managed under the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands master plan. Planned entry into bottomland hardwood forest, yet to be harvested. First entry in the rotation, intermediate thinning. Small pockets of aspen were entirely marked for coppice regeneration. Species selection marked to discourage ash given the presence of Emerald Ash Borer. Reed canary grass is an invasive of concern that they are trying to control by maintaining a closed canopy. Harvest area was close to adjoining private property, reviewed boundary procedures.

Site #2 Glacial Habitat Restoration Area (GHRA)- Orton/Brooks – tract #2-09

Rachel Brookins – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager

Tom Vanden Elzen – Forester

GHRA is a regional approach to wildlife management planning. The program aimed to create a patchwork of restored grassland and wetland areas throughout a four county area. Existing farmland throughout the project area were assessed for habitat value, and expressions of interest to purchase the properties were made. The result is approximately 16,000 acres spread over 75 small properties throughout the project area. These properties are dedicated to natural habitat in areas that are predominantly agricultural and undergoing gradual development from urban areas.

Orton/Brooks property is primarily grassland for ducks and songbirds, conversion of farmland to prairie and wetland. Planned harvest area is clearing 3 acre area of aspen and maple with goal to regenerate a younger aspen stand.

Site #3 Glacial Habitat Restoration Area – Soltysik – tract #3-09

Rachel Brookins – Wildlife Biologist, Property Manager

Tom Vanden Elzen – Forester

Planned harvest, first thinning of 7 acre stand of northern hardwood. Harvest goal is to promote greater tree size and age diversity. Archeological site present (burial mound) which requires winter only harvesting on frozen ground. Property is adjacent to Rush Lake wetland area.

Site #4 Glacial Habitat Restoration Area – Baber – tract 2-14  
James Christopolous – Property Manager  
Tom Vanden Elzen – Forester

Planned sale, approximately 40 acres. Property had previously been owned by a timber company and highgraded using a diameter limit cut. Harvest prescription was to improve species composition by removing box elder and ash. Small pockets of aspen to be regenerated.

Site #5 Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area  
Paul Samerdyke, Property Manager  
Randy Stampfl, Forester

Property overview of Horicon Marsh – the largest freshwater cattail marsh in the U.S. Tour of new interpretive feature at the visitor center; museum level quality exhibits devoted to the natural history of the marsh.

**Appendix 3**  
**SFI Forest Management Public Summary Report**

## **Wisconsin DNR State Lands 2015 SFI Public Summary Recertification Audit Report**

The SFI Program of the Wisconsin DNR has achieved continuing conformance with the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 2, according to the NSF SFIS Certification Audit Process. This report describes the 2015 Recertification Audit designed to consider the entire program and all requirements, including any changes in operations, the management review system, and efforts at continuous improvement.

The Wisconsin State Forests have been certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Standard since May 5, 2004 (SFI certificate #NSF-SFIS-1Y941). In 2009 the scope of the Wisconsin SFI Program was expanded, and the program was recertified including programs for management of several categories of state lands beyond state forests, including parks, wildlife lands, and other categories of generally forested lands. DNR land included in the project includes approximately 1,558,761 acres. Excised acreage includes predominantly special purpose lands (such as fish hatcheries, tree nurseries, communications towers, and administrative sites) and land under easement where DNR does not have land management authority. The program was recertified to the SFI 2010-2014 Standard in 2012 and has updated to the 2015-2019 Standard with the 2015 Recertification Audit.

### **An Overview of Forest Management on Wisconsin State Forests**

Wisconsin DNR lands are managed for multiple-use objectives. Along with non-timber objectives, the DNR lands are used to demonstrate various forest practices to the public, while meeting a variety of habitat objectives. Resource managers within the Department of Natural Resources use these objectives in conjunction with other demands to manage each state forest as a healthy ecosystem. In recent years the average annual harvest has been budgeted at 18,000 acres. This is a very conservative number and is based on area regulation. A majority of the harvests occur on State Forests (which constitute 1/3 of the DNR land base). Reflecting a greater focus on non-timber objectives, other DNR land such as wildlife areas and state parks (with 2/3 of the land base) produce 1/3 of the average annual harvest acreage.

Of the area harvested a majority of the management prescriptions are thinnings, which reduce the density of stems to accelerate growth of the remaining trees and vertical structural diversity within the stand harvested. The remaining stands that are actively managed are harvested using regeneration techniques. After harvest these stands are either replanted or regenerate naturally and will continue to grow and produce forests and wood products for future generations. These regenerating forests also provide important habitat for species associated with young forests such as the snowshoe hare and woodcock.

Harvested stands are either regenerated naturally or are planted with seedlings. The determination of which method to use is based on the ability of the site to regenerate naturally and the ability of the desired species to regenerate on a particular site. For example, if a site experiences hot and dry conditions planting may be the best alternative. This is most common for the pine species, especially jack pine.

Even-aged and uneven-aged management schemes are the harvest systems employed on Wisconsin DNR's land. Even-aged management includes clearcuts, clearcuts with reserves, seed tree methods, shelterwood cuttings, and intermediate thinnings. Uneven-aged management includes both individual and group selection techniques. Each of these systems and techniques are designed in conjunction with a particular tree species or community of trees. For example, uneven-aged single tree and group selection techniques are used in northern hardwoods, hemlock-hardwood, and swamp hardwood stands. In contrast, even-aged clearcuts are used in pine (red, white, and jack), paper birch, aspen, oak, northern hardwoods, scrub oak, aspen, fir-spruce, and black spruce stands. The selection of a management system and specific technique depends on many factors including tree composition, age of the stand, location, accessibility, and most importantly the long-term objectives for the stand under consideration."



## An Overview of Forest Management on Wisconsin State Park Lands

Source: Managing Forests on Wisconsin State Park Lands 2010

### **Background**

Wisconsin's forested lands are some of our state's most valuable resources, prized by visitors and citizens alike. People come to these special places for moments of quiet reflection or simply to be in the great outdoors. They pursue recreational opportunities ranging from biking and hiking to camping, wildlife watching, and cross country skiing.

Scenic beauty — or “visual quality” — is one of the primary reasons people choose to spend their recreation and vacation time in or near forested areas and within Wisconsin State Park System (WSPS) properties. They are also attracted by the serenity and solitude of the outdoors. Forested landscapes inspire spiritual and emotional connections resulting in deeply personal experiences for many people.

Protecting and enhancing this sensory experience is a priority for those entrusted with managing WSPS properties. In addition, management must work to sustain healthy communities that provide economic, social, and ecological benefits, now and for future generations. This careful oversight of our natural resources is a cornerstone of the WSPS mission.

### **Overall Management Priorities**

Sustaining healthy forests is a vital role of WSPS properties, and the key to sustaining healthy forests is pro-active management. To ensure that management practices are consistent with the goals and objectives of the WSPS, several management priorities have been established but may vary depending on site characteristics:

- **Aesthetics:** Protect scenic views and allow forest cover to provide settings for solitude and privacy.
- **Recreation:** Sustain large canopy cover and shade in picnic areas, campgrounds, along nature trails, and high use areas.
- **Habitat:** Provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife and plants, including endangered and threatened species.
- **Forest Health:** Allow for regeneration of the forest through quality forest management and seek opportunities that enhance or maintain the overall health and vigor of the forest ecosystem.
- **Pest management:** Manage invasive plant and animal species, pests, diseases, and nuisance wildlife through prevention, control, and eradication activities.
- **Education and research:** Provide opportunities for interpretation, education, and scientific research.
- **Water quality:** Sustain and enhance local watersheds and water resources including erosion control along waterways, trails, and other property features.”

## An Overview of Forest Management on Wisconsin Wildlife Areas

Since 1876, the State of Wisconsin has been acquiring land to meet conservation and recreation needs. Public lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provide many opportunities and public spaces for people to hunt, fish, trap, hike, canoe, or watch or photograph wildlife. All Wildlife Areas are managed to sustain the wildlife and natural communities found on the properties and to provide a full range of traditional outdoor recreational uses.

The forest resources on state wildlife areas can be broadly characterized as Oak and Pine Barrens, Southern Forests, Oak Savanna, and Northern Forests.

### **Oak and Pine Barrens**

Less than 1% of the pre-settlement oak and pine barren habitat remains. The long term sustainability of this habitat and the organisms that it supports will require that we protect and connect the existing scattered sites. The composition, structure, and ecological function of these communities depend on periodic fires as a management tool but may be mimicked with appropriately applied timber management strategies and aggressive post-sale treatment applied as a shifting mosaic across the appropriate ecological landscapes.

### **Southern Forests**

Although the southern forest type is common, large, high-quality, unbroken tracts are becoming rare. Oak regeneration continues to be a problem on dry-mesic and mesic sites. With lack of fire or other disturbance, oak forests are continuing to convert to more mesic forest species. Oak wilt and competition from invasive shrubs continue to be a problem in some areas. Appropriately applied timber management strategies are critical to maintaining the oak resource.

### **Oak Savanna**

In the absence of active management, the future of oak savanna looks very bleak in Wisconsin and throughout its entire range. The increasing abandonment of lightly to moderately grazed wooded pastures and the accelerating succession of oak woodlots toward heavy shade producing trees and shrubs will lead to the decline and possible loss of much of what remains of the savanna flora and fauna, including eventual decline of the oaks themselves. In a few ecological landscapes the recovery potential exists with active management.

### **Northern Forest**

Overall stand age has decreased and tree species relative abundance has changed. Generalist species have increased and specialist species have declined. Invasive species have continued to degrade northern forests. Second growth northern hardwood forests lack species diversity. However, there is still great potential for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in the northern forest. Identification of “high conservation value” forests via planning processes will increase the likelihood that we’ll sustain ecologically important forests. Maintaining a full spectrum of forest ecosystems in the appropriate ecological landscapes with a range of successional stages, patch sizes, ages, geographic distribution, and connectivity is an important timber management goal.

### **SFIS Recertification Audit Process**

The Recertification Audit was performed by NSF on August 17-21, 2015 by an audit team headed by Norman Boatwright, SFI Lead Auditor. The team included Mike Thompson, Team Auditor and Brendan Grady, FSC Lead Auditor. Audit team members fulfill the qualification criteria for conducting SFIS Certification Audits found in Section 9 – SFI 2015-2019 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications contained in Requirements for the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules. The Wisconsin DNR’s management representative is Mark Heyde, Forest Certification Coordinator, Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry.

The objective of the audit was to assess conformance of the firm’s SFI Program to the requirements of the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules, Section 2. The audit served to assess conformance with the entire standard to determine eligibility for a new, three-year certificate. The audit was conducted in conjunction with an FSC audit covering the same lands and organization and by the same audit team. The two processes (SFI and FSC) shared teams and reviewed much of the same evidence, but each program had a different team leader and audit objectives. This report is intended to describe the SFI portion of the evaluation only (more information about the FSC portion of the evaluation is available from WDNR).

The Indicators and Performance Measures of the SFI 2015-2019, Section 2 were utilized without modification or substitution.

The audit was governed by an audit plan and by NSF audit protocols designed to enable the audit team determine conformance with the applicable SFI requirements. The process included the assembly and review of audit evidence consisting of documents, interviews, and on-site inspections of ongoing or completed forest practices. Documents describing these activities and lists of management activities were provided to the auditors in advance, and a sample of the available field sites was designated by the lead auditor for review. Approximately twenty percent (20%) of the sites visited were randomly selected. The remaining field sites were selected based on the risk of environmental impact, special features, and other criteria outlined in the NSF-SFI-SOP.

During the audit the audit team reviewed a sample of the available written documentation as objective evidence of SFIS Conformance. The lead auditor also selected and interviewed stakeholders such as contract loggers, landowners and other interested parties, and interviewed employees within the organization to confirm that the SFI Standard was understood and actively implemented.

The possible findings for specific SFI requirements included Full Conformance, Major Non-conformance, Minor Non-conformance, Opportunities for Improvement, and Practices that exceeded the Basic Requirements of the SFIS.

### **2014 Audit Findings**

An opportunity for improvement was identified during the 2014 Surveillance Audit:

*CI 4.1.5: Program for assessment, conducted either individually or collaboratively, of forest cover types, age or size classes, and habitats at the individual ownership level and, where credible data are available, across the landscape, and take into account findings in planning and management activities.* Where Master Plans don't exist, there is an opportunity to improve the assessment of forest cover types, age and size classes and habitats at the landscape level when formulating Interim Forest Management Plans.

Review of the Interim Forest Management Plans for sites visited indicate that CI 4.1.5 was adequately addressed.

### **2015 Audit Findings**

No new non-conformances or opportunities for improvement were observed.

The following list describes areas where the Wisconsin DNR's practices exceed the SFI Standard requirements:

*CI 2.4.3: Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control programs.* The Department has an exemplary program across Bureaus to manage, control and eradicate invasive species.

*CI 4.1.1: Program to incorporate the conservation of native biological diversity, including species, wildlife habitats and ecological community types at stand and landscape levels.* The Department has an exemplary program across Bureaus to maintain and improve native biological diversity including prairie and grassland establishment and management.

*CI 4.1.5: Program to address conservation of known sites with viable occurrences of significant species of concern.* Wetland habitat restoration activities including the installation of water control structures on the Rowan Creek Fishery Area and French Creek Wildlife Area. Also, during the timber sale recon for of the sales on the Rowan Creek Fishery Area, a blue heron rookery was identified, a significant buffer installed and the area denoted in the GIS database.

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

*plant and animal communities.* DNR has a comprehensive program for identifying, controlling, and monitoring the occurrence of invasive exotic plants and animals that threaten the ecological integrity of the state's ecosystems.

CI 5.4.1: *Provide recreational opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.* Recreation opportunities are implicit to DNR's mission. State Parks, Wildlife Areas, State Forests, fisheries properties and many other types of state owned forest lands are developed for a variety of developed and primitive recreation experiences. The Natural Resources Board has emphasized opening lands suitable for motorized access and the department is updating its road and trail inventory to identify additional opportunities for motorized public access.

CI 10.1.1: *Financial or in-kind support of research to address questions of relevance in the region of operations. Examples could include, but are not limited to, areas of forest productivity, water quality, biodiversity, community issues, or similar areas which build broader understanding of the benefits and impacts of forest management.* DNR funds research (internal and external) on a broad range of issues: forest health, chemical efficiency, water quality, wildlife management, conservation, social issues, energy efficiency, forest operations, etc. The Department develops a forestry research agenda with the Wisconsin Council on Forestry and partners.

PM: 13.1: *Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall participate in the development of public land planning and management processes.* Public input opportunities during master planning are superb including: Local outreach to stakeholders and the community level: annual stakeholder meetings, listening sessions, newsletters, integrated property management meetings; outreach is scaled to the public's level of interest and relative risk.

The next audit will be scheduled during the late summer of 2016. This will be a Surveillance audit, covering a portion of the SFI 2015-2019 Standard.

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### **General Description of Evidence of Conformity**

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

**Objective 1. Forest Management Planning** - To ensure forest management plans include long-term sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid forest conversion.

**Summary of Evidence** – Property master plans serve as management plans for the larger (Tier 1 and Tier 2) parcels. The smaller parcels are covered by agency-specific planning guidance documents, with parcel specific objectives found on-line. The entire ownership is covered by detailed forestry protocols and manuals as well as associated inventory data and WisFIRS inventory analysis and harvest scheduling software. Inventory data was up-to-date. Planning approaches vary depending on property size and intended use.

**Objective 2. Forest Productivity** - To ensure long-term forest productivity, carbon storage and conservation of forest resources through prompt reforestation, afforestation, minimized chemical use, soil conservation, and protecting forests from damaging agents.

**Summary of Evidence** – Field observations and records associated with each timber harvest (2460 form and associated narratives) were used to confirm practices. Wisconsin DNR has programs for reforestation, for protection against insects, diseases, and wildfire, and for careful management of activities which could potentially impact soil and long-term productivity.

**Objective 3. Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources** - To protect the water quality of rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands and other water bodies through meeting or exceeding best management practices.

**Summary of Evidence** – Field observations of a range of sites were the key evidence. Auditors visited the portions of many field sites that were close to water resources, based on a field sample that was oriented heavily towards such sites.

**Objective 4. Conservation of Biological Diversity including Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value** - To manage the quality and distribution of wildlife habitats and contribute to the conservation of biological diversity by developing and implementing stand- and landscape-level measures that promote a diversity of types of habitat and successional stages, and the conservation of forest plants and animals, including aquatic species, as well as threatened and endangered species, Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old-growth forests and ecologically important sites.

**Summary of Evidence** – Field observations, written plans and policies, use of college-trained field biologists, availability of specialists, and regular staff involvement in conferences and workshops that cover scientific advances were the evidence used to assess the requirements involved biodiversity conservation. The close support and cooperation of various agencies, including those responsible for wildlife, fisheries, recreation, and endangered resources, were another key factor in the assessment.

**Objective 5. Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits** - To manage the visual impact of forest operations and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

**Summary of Evidence** – Field observations of completed operations and policies/procedures for visual quality were assessed during the evaluation. Further maps of recreation sites, combined with field visits, helped confirm a strong recreation program. Recreational use and esthetics were priority concerns where appropriate.

**Objective 6. Protection of Special Sites** - To manage lands that are ecologically, geologically, or culturally important in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

**Summary of Evidence** – Field observations of completed operations, records of special sites, training records, and written protection plans were all assessed during the evaluation. The strong program of Scientific Natural Areas contributed to the conclusions.

**Objective 7. Efficient Use of Forest Resources** - To minimize waste and ensure the efficient use of fiber resources.

**Summary of Evidence** – Field observations of completed operations, contract clauses, harvest inspection reports, and discussions with supervising field foresters and with loggers provided the key evidence. On those sites where harvests had been completed the indicator was being met through reasonable utilization, harvest inspections, and lump-sum sales.

**Objective 8 - Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights** - To recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights and traditional knowledge.

**Summary of Evidence:** The Company's attempts to solicit input from Indigenous Peoples provided the key evidence

**Objective 9. Legal and Regulatory Compliance** - To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state and local laws and regulations.

**Summary of Evidence** – Field reviews of ongoing and completed operations were the most critical evidence. Most of the requirements were not edited this year, but the ready availability of BMP manuals and access to laws were factors in finding conformance.

**Objective 10. Forestry Research, Science, and Technology** - To invest in forestry research, science and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based and broaden the awareness of climate change impacts on forests, wildlife and biological diversity.

**Summary of Evidence** – Financial records were confirmed, and some field research sites were visited.

**Objective 11. Training and Education** - To improve the implementation of sustainable forestry practices through appropriate training and education programs.

**Summary of Evidence** – Training records of selected personnel, records associated with harvest sites audited, and logger and stakeholder interviews were the key evidence for this objective.

**Objective 12. Community Involvement in the Practice of Sustainable Forestry** - To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry through public outreach, education, and involvement, and to support the efforts of SFI Implementation Committees.

**Summary of Evidence** – Wisconsin DNR has an extensive program of outreach and landowner education, including a website and is active in the MI SIC.

**Objective 13: Public Land Management Responsibilities** - To participate and implement sustainable forest management on public lands.

**Summary of Evidence** – Interviews and review of documents were used to confirm the requirements. Interviewees included members of “friends” groups for state parks. Wisconsin DNR answers to the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board, providing regular opportunities for citizen input and a long-term and very knowledgeable governing board of citizens as well.

**Objective 14. Communications and Public Reporting** - To increase transparency and to annually report progress on conformance with the SFI Forest Management Standard.

**Summary of Evidence** – Reports filed with SFI Inc. and the SFI Inc. website provided the key evidence.

**Objective 15. Management Review and Continual Improvement** - To promote continual improvement in the practice of sustainable forestry by conducting a management review and monitoring performance.

**Summary of Evidence** – Records of program reviews, agendas and notes from management review meetings, and interviews with personnel from all involved levels in the organization were assessed. The Forest Leadership Team of the Forestry Division and the Land Leadership Team of the Lands Division are the critical components of management review; minutes of meetings supplemented by interviews served to confirm compliance.

### **Relevance of Forestry Certification**

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

#### **1. Sustainable Forestry**

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

## **2. Forest Productivity and Health**

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

## **3. Protection of Water Resources**

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

## **4. Protection of Biological Diversity**

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

## **5. Aesthetics and Recreation**

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

## **6. Protection of Special Sites**

To manage forests and lands of special significance (ecologically, geologically or culturally important) in a manner that protects their integrity and takes into account their unique qualities.

## **7. Responsible Fiber Sourcing Practices in North America**

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

## **8. Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Illegal Logging in Offshore Fiber Sourcing**

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

## **9. Legal Compliance**

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

## **10. Research**

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

## **11. Training and Education**

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

## **12. Public Involvement**

To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry on public lands through community involvement.

## **13. Transparency**

To broaden the understanding of forest certification to the SFI 2010-2014 Standard by documenting certification audits and making the findings publicly available.

#### **14. Continual Improvement**

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

*Source: Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Standard, 2010-2014 Edition*

#### **For Additional Information Contact:**

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**Appendix 4**  
**Meeting Attendance**

2015 Forest Certification Audit WPN

OPENING MTG Aug 17, 2015 MADISON

NAME AFFILIATION / SUBJECT

Teague Prichard	WDNR STATE FORESTS CO
R.S. Witzchan	WDNR
MATT ZINE	WDNR - ST. NATURAL AREAS
Arona Buchholz	WDNR - Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Mark Heyde	WDNR - Forest Cert. Coord.
Sharene Smith	WDNR - REAL ESTATE
<del>Micahna Thompson</del>	<del>WDNR</del>
Joe Schwantes	WDNR - County + Public Forest Specialist
James Warren	WDNR - Public/Private Section Chief
FRANK TRICKA	WDNR - WILDLIFE DEPT. BUREAU
JEFF PRY	WDNR - State Parks <sup>Dir.</sup>
Paul Cunningham	WDNR FISH
<u>KATE FITZGERALD</u>	WDNR LAND, Facilities
Bruce Henderson	Forest
Jason Hennico	
McKenzie	Waushara
Aaron Young	Dodge
Scott Sullivan	
David Sample	SMA progre
Tom Vandendyven	Forester
Andy North	Forester
Adam Zirbel	KMSF
John Nicholas	Forester
Bill Ruff	forester, Door
Tom Duke	NW Forest ldr



8/21/15

WIDNR SFI RECERT  
CLOSING MEETING

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
NORTON BOATWRIGHT	SFI LEAD AUDITOR
TEAGUE PRICHARD	DNR Forestry
Aaron Bochkov	Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Jeff Pratt	State Parks
Frank Treka	WILDLIFE
MATT ZIME	NHC
Paul Cunningham	Fisheries Management
Mark Heyde	Forest Cost. Coord.
Mike Thompson	Assistant
Mary Ann Buenzow	SSD Forestry Leader
Brendan Grady	FSC Lead Auditor
Jason ?	FR
Nicholas Coltz	FR
Jeff ?	
RS Whichon	FR Team Ldr.
John Lubbers	FR tm. Ldr.
Steve Moliday	FR
Kate Lenz	FR staff specialist
Bill Ruff	FR Door Co
Randy Stanfl	FR Horicon
Adam Zirbel	FR KMSF
Tom Vandenzon	FR oshkosh
Daniel Castro	FR Deputy Dir. Administrator

**Appendix 5**  
**Form for Reporting SFI/FS Certification**  
**(not included as there are no changes)**