

FSC® - Forest Management Digital Audit Report Supplement

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources – County Forest Program

SCS-FM/COC-00083G

Client Address	<u>Wisconsin DNR - Forestry Division 101 S Webster Street PO Box 7921</u>
Client Contact	<u>Doug Brown</u> Phone: <u>715-966-0157</u> <u>Douglas.Brown@Wisconsin.gov</u>
Client Website	<u>https://wisconsincountyforests.com</u>

CERTIFIED	EXPIRATION
22 December 2019	21 December 2024

DATE OF FIELD EVALUATION
31 July – 4 August 2023
DATE OF REPORT FINALIZATION
20 October 2023

TYPE OF EVALUATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> Main Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> 1st Surveillance
<input type="checkbox"/> Re-Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> 2nd Surveillance
<input type="checkbox"/> Transfer	<input type="checkbox"/> 3rd Surveillance
<input type="checkbox"/> Expansion of Scope	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4th Surveillance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Surveillance: #

This document contains the conformity tables and certificate tracking information that together with the Digital Audit Report constitute a complete FSC Forest Management Audit Report.

Table of Contents

Appendix 1 – Additional Evaluation Techniques Employed	3
Appendix 2 – Required Tracking	3
Appendix 3 – Forest Management Conformance Table	5
Appendix 4 – Chain of Custody Indicators for FMEs Conformance Table	5
Appendix 5 – Trademark Standard Conformance Table	36
Appendix 6 – Group Management Program	44
Appendix 7 – Additional Checklists	44

Appendix 1 – Staff and Stakeholders Consulted

List of FME Staff Consulted

To protect privacy, only FME staff who have expressly provided written permission are listed. **These records are retained by SCS and subject to FSC or ASI examination.**

Name	Title	Contact Information	Consultation method
Refer to sign in sheets (note that Barron County attendees were in attendance at opening meeting).			



Opening_Meeting_ Sawyer_County_Attendees_07312022.pdf Washburn_County_Attendees_080123.pdf Attendees_080323.p

List of other Stakeholders Consulted*

To protect privacy, only stakeholders who have expressly provided written permission are listed. **These records are retained by SCS and subject to FSC or ASI examination.**

Name	Title	Contact Information	Consultation method	Requests Stakeholder Notification? (Y/N)
Shannon Hershey	Harvesting contractor	715-588-1515	Field	N
Jim Sokup	Recreational user; American Birkebeiner	715-588-5355	Field	Y
Confidential	Harvesting contractor	Confidential	Field	N
Confidential	Recreational user	Confidential	Field	N
Confidential	Harvesting contractor	Confidential	Field	N

* Note: SCS may maintain additional records of stakeholder consultation activities (e.g., email notifications) in its recordkeeping system. Anonymous stakeholders may have provided comments as a part of stakeholder outreach activities, such communications are retained by SCS subject to FSC and ASI examination.

Appendix 2 – Additional Evaluation Techniques Employed

- None.
- Additional techniques employed (describe):

Appendix 3 – Required Tracking

History of Findings for Certificate Period

FM Principle	Cert/Re-cert Evaluation (2019)	1 st Annual Evaluation (2020)	2 nd Annual Evaluation (2021)	3 rd Annual Evaluation (2022)	4 th Annual Evaluation (2023)
No findings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P1					
P2					

P3					
P4					
P5					
P6			Minor 6.6.e		Obs 6.5.b
P7			Minor 7.3.a		
P8			Obs 8.1.a		Obs 8.3.a/COC 2.5
P9			Obs 9.1.a	Minor 9.1.b, Minor 9.1.c	
P10					
COC for FM					Obs 8.3.a/COC 2.5
Trademark					
Group					
Other			Minor POL-30-001 4.12.2		

Progressive HCVF Assessments

FME does not use partial or progressive HCVF assessments.*

Special Instructions or Scoping Notes for Next Regularly Scheduled Annual Audit

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable; no significant issues identified that may impact the next audit.
Some issues were identified during this audit that the next audit team could consider in the next audit, such as:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Scope of certificate:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Audit sampling:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Audit time:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Audit season:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Travel time between sites or FMUs:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Audit frequency:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggested audit team competency for next audit:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggested requirements to include during the next audit:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggested issues investigate during the next audit:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggested sites for inspection:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stakeholders to be consulted:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other(s) – please describe:

*Note: information audit team leaders wish to remain confidential may be communicated directly to SCS.

Requirements Reviewed in Annual Evaluation

Audit Year	Requirements Reviewed (FSC P&C Reviewed, FM/COC Indicators, Trademark Indicators, Group Standard Indicators, etc.)
------------	--

2019	All – (Re)certification Evaluation
2020	P2, P4, P7, CoC, TM and mandatory criteria: 1.5, 2.3, 3.2, 4.2, 4.4, 5.6, 6.2, 6.3, 6.9, 8.2, and 9.4
2021	P1, P6, mandatory criteria: 1.5, 2.3, 3.2, 4.2, 4.4, 5.6, 6.2, 6.3, 6.9, 8.2, and 9.4
2022	P3, P5 mandatory criteria: 1.5, 2.3, 3.2, 4.2, 4.4, 5.6, 6.2, 6.3, 6.9, 8.2, and 9.4
2023	P8 (monitoring and COC, including SCS COC indicators) and P9 (HCVs); and mandatory criteria: 1.5, 2.3, 3.2, 4.2, 4.4, 5.6, 6.2, 6.3, 6.9, 8.2, and 9.4

Appendix 4 – Forest Management Conformance Table

C= Conformance with Criterion or Indicator
NC= Nonconformance with Criterion or Indicator
NA = Not Applicable
NE = Not Evaluated

REQUIREMENT	C/NC	COMMENT/CAR
P1 Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.		
C1.1 Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements.	NE	
C1.2. All applicable and legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges shall be paid.	NE	
C1.3. In signatory countries, the provisions of all binding international agreements such as CITES, ILO Conventions, ITTA, and Convention on Biological Diversity, shall be respected.	NE	
C1.4. Conflicts between laws, regulations and the FSC Principles and Criteria shall be evaluated for the purposes of certification, on a case by case basis, by the certifiers and the involved or affected parties.	NE	
C1.5. Forest management areas should be protected from illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorized activities.	C	-
1.5.a. The forest owner or manager supports or implements measures intended to prevent illegal and unauthorized activities on the Forest Management Unit (FMU).	C	Timber theft, trespass, and other illegal or unauthorized activities on county forests are dealt with locally and are typically investigated by county law enforcement, DNR wardens, or county forest patrol or recreation staff, as confirmed through interviews with county staff. The FMUs are regularly patrolled by county or DNR employees to detect illegal or unauthorized activities. Recreational user groups (e.g., ATV/HUV clubs, snowmobile clubs, and mountain biking clubs) are important mechanisms for monitoring the behavior of recreational users. Additionally, active timber sales are monitored by county foresters several times per week, which includes ensuring that illegal

	<p>or unauthorized activities in harvested sites do not occur. County sheriffs, wardens, and other law enforcement issue citations for ordinance violations (e.g., off-trail ATV use, unpermitted firewood cutting, illegal deer stands, etc.).</p> <p>WCFP takes considerable action to limit illegal and unauthorized activities. Audit team observed gates, berms, and the implementation of other access control techniques including posted signs indicating allowed uses. Surveillance techniques may also be employed in cases of vandalism, trespass, dumping, or other illegal activities.</p> <p>Property boundaries are marked on the ground in advance of timber sales, as well as on harvest map, as verified by the 2023 audit team.</p> <p>The following counties reported illegal harvesting or activities in 2023:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="813 835 1528 1873"> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 835 1528 1161"> <p>Bayfield: Isolated incidents of unauthorized birch pole cutting. Primarily along right of ways. Reported to Sheriff's Dept (Recreation Officer). Ongoing investigations. Also occasional reports of unauthorized motorized use and illegal tree stands. Also reported to Recreation Officer and addressed on a case-by-case basis. There has been an increase in illegal dumping. This is also reported, though very difficult to enforce/address. The Department collects and disposes of most items when discovered, and tracks and organizes clean-up days on the larger piles.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1161 1528 1388"> <p>Clark: The Clark County Sherriff's Department issues citations for ordinance violations on the county forest throughout the year (i.e. off trail ATV use, unpermitted firewood cutting, illegal tree stands, etc.). There have been no recent occurrences of illegal timber harvest activity on the Clark County Forest. Property line issues/encroachments are dealt with on a case-by-case basis as they are verified via survey.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1388 1528 1423"> <p>Douglas: Some birch pole theft. Ongoing investigation.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1423 1528 1682"> <p>Lincoln: We have found a few locations of illegal white birch pole cutting on the county forest. Law enforcement is currently investigating. Occasional illegal dumping, off trail/road travel, dead trees near roads cut for firewood, illegal motorized trail/road use and vandalism are reported to our Recreation Officer to investigate. If a responsible party is caught, they face fines and restitution expense. No illegal settlement we are aware of.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1682 1528 1873"> <p>Oneida: A case of inadvertent encroachment of a cabin onto Oneida County Forest property was discovered following a survey for timber sale lines. The county is working on withdrawing a 0.33 ac lot from County Forest Program to solve this encroachment. The survey cost, administration and 3x appraised value of the lot will be charged to the landowner.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Bayfield: Isolated incidents of unauthorized birch pole cutting. Primarily along right of ways. Reported to Sheriff's Dept (Recreation Officer). Ongoing investigations. Also occasional reports of unauthorized motorized use and illegal tree stands. Also reported to Recreation Officer and addressed on a case-by-case basis. There has been an increase in illegal dumping. This is also reported, though very difficult to enforce/address. The Department collects and disposes of most items when discovered, and tracks and organizes clean-up days on the larger piles.</p>	<p>Clark: The Clark County Sherriff's Department issues citations for ordinance violations on the county forest throughout the year (i.e. off trail ATV use, unpermitted firewood cutting, illegal tree stands, etc.). There have been no recent occurrences of illegal timber harvest activity on the Clark County Forest. Property line issues/encroachments are dealt with on a case-by-case basis as they are verified via survey.</p>	<p>Douglas: Some birch pole theft. Ongoing investigation.</p>	<p>Lincoln: We have found a few locations of illegal white birch pole cutting on the county forest. Law enforcement is currently investigating. Occasional illegal dumping, off trail/road travel, dead trees near roads cut for firewood, illegal motorized trail/road use and vandalism are reported to our Recreation Officer to investigate. If a responsible party is caught, they face fines and restitution expense. No illegal settlement we are aware of.</p>	<p>Oneida: A case of inadvertent encroachment of a cabin onto Oneida County Forest property was discovered following a survey for timber sale lines. The county is working on withdrawing a 0.33 ac lot from County Forest Program to solve this encroachment. The survey cost, administration and 3x appraised value of the lot will be charged to the landowner.</p>
<p>Bayfield: Isolated incidents of unauthorized birch pole cutting. Primarily along right of ways. Reported to Sheriff's Dept (Recreation Officer). Ongoing investigations. Also occasional reports of unauthorized motorized use and illegal tree stands. Also reported to Recreation Officer and addressed on a case-by-case basis. There has been an increase in illegal dumping. This is also reported, though very difficult to enforce/address. The Department collects and disposes of most items when discovered, and tracks and organizes clean-up days on the larger piles.</p>						
<p>Clark: The Clark County Sherriff's Department issues citations for ordinance violations on the county forest throughout the year (i.e. off trail ATV use, unpermitted firewood cutting, illegal tree stands, etc.). There have been no recent occurrences of illegal timber harvest activity on the Clark County Forest. Property line issues/encroachments are dealt with on a case-by-case basis as they are verified via survey.</p>						
<p>Douglas: Some birch pole theft. Ongoing investigation.</p>						
<p>Lincoln: We have found a few locations of illegal white birch pole cutting on the county forest. Law enforcement is currently investigating. Occasional illegal dumping, off trail/road travel, dead trees near roads cut for firewood, illegal motorized trail/road use and vandalism are reported to our Recreation Officer to investigate. If a responsible party is caught, they face fines and restitution expense. No illegal settlement we are aware of.</p>						
<p>Oneida: A case of inadvertent encroachment of a cabin onto Oneida County Forest property was discovered following a survey for timber sale lines. The county is working on withdrawing a 0.33 ac lot from County Forest Program to solve this encroachment. The survey cost, administration and 3x appraised value of the lot will be charged to the landowner.</p>						

		<p>Illegal dumping continues to be an issue. Moving of rock blockades to access a carry in boat launch with a vehicle. Cameras were used but no further incidents occurred.</p> <p>Taylor: Worked with County Sheriff’s Department and Wisconsin DNR Law Enforcement. Theft of logs from a county forest timber sale. Unscaled logs hauled. Resolved with contract penalty and 2-year bidding ban. No citation or warning issued.</p> <p>Wood: Dumping: No Progress actually catching or stopping offenders. Periodically pick up/ clean up as time and road access allows.</p>
<p>1.5.b. If illegal or unauthorized activities occur, the forest owner or manager implements actions designed to curtail such activities and correct the situation to the extent possible for meeting all land management objectives with consideration of available resources.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Maintaining a regular presence and good relations with user groups, as described in 1.5.a., are considered actions designed to curtail illegal or unauthorized activities.</p> <p>Wisconsin law allows flexibility in how timber theft and trespass cases are treated. Fines or payment of yield taxes or severance shares can be assigned. Such fines or payments are set between \$100 and \$10,000, but violators may be subject to criminal prosecution or required to cover additional expenses for the assessment and recovery of stolen timber. No significant instances of timber trespass were reported for the counties sampled in this year’s audit.</p> <p>Illegal harvesting of birch poles and pine boughs occurs on occasion. Monitoring with cameras and on-the-ground enforcement patrols are used to detect violators. In some areas, the counties have painted roadside birch to more easily track any trees removed illegally.</p> <p>Some counties, such as Douglas County, offer an anonymous violation reporting form on their websites that can be used by citizens to submit violation reports. Many counties have brochures that cover a variety of topics, including rules and regulations governing use of the forest, that are available to the general public as mechanisms for public education.</p>
<p>C1.6. Forest managers shall demonstrate a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>P2 Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.</p>		
<p>C2.1. Clear evidence of long-term forest use rights to the land (e.g., land title, customary rights, or lease agreements) shall be demonstrated.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C2.2. Local communities with legal or customary tenure or use rights shall maintain</p>	<p>NE</p>	

<p>control, to the extent necessary to protect their rights or resources, over forest operations unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.</p>		
<p>C2.3. Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed to resolve disputes over tenure claims and use rights. The circumstances and status of any outstanding disputes will be explicitly considered in the certification evaluation. Disputes of substantial magnitude involving a significant number of interests will normally disqualify an operation from being certified.</p>	C	
<p>2.3.a. If <i>disputes</i> arise regarding tenure claims or use rights then the forest owner or manager initially attempts to resolve them through open communication, negotiation, and/or mediation. If these good-faith efforts fail, then federal, state, and/or local laws are employed to resolve such disputes.</p>	C	<p>No significant disputes regarding tenure claims or use rights have occurred in the last year. The FME also has mechanisms in place to seek the input of stakeholders and any disputes through open communication, negotiation, and/or mediation.</p>
<p>2.3.b. The forest owner or manager documents any significant disputes over tenure and use rights.</p>	C	<p>The DNR and counties maintain written documentation of any significant disputes over tenure and use rights.</p>
<p>P3 The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.</p>		
<p>C3.1. Indigenous peoples shall control forest management on their lands and territories unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.</p>	NA	<p>FME does not manage any tribally-owned FMUs.</p>
<p>C3.2. Forest management shall not threaten or diminish, either directly or indirectly, the resources or tenure rights of indigenous peoples.</p>	C	
<p>3.2.a. During management planning, the forest owner or manager consults with American Indian groups that have legal rights or other binding agreements to the FMU to avoid harming their resources or rights.</p>	C	<p>Indian treaty rights, and specifically Lake Superior Bands of Chippewa, were granted reserved rights to hunt, fish, and gather on all ceded lands in eastern Minnesota and northern Wisconsin as part of the treaties of 1837 and 1842. County board meetings and forestry committee meetings in which policies for resource management are set provide opportunities for public input, including representatives of American Indian groups. The counties have established formal policies requiring consultation with tribal nations. The DNR and counties maintain relationships with local tribes and solicit input as needed.</p>
<p>3.2.b. Demonstrable actions are taken so that forest management does not adversely affect tribal resources. When applicable, evidence of,</p>	C	<p>County and DNR staff are cognizant of the need to ensure that forest management activities do not adversely affect tribal resources. For example, on</p>

<p>and measures for, protecting tribal resources are incorporated in the management plan.</p>		<p>public lands within the ceded territory, which include county forests, a free permit process is used to provide for tribal gathering of firewood, boughs, tree bark, lodge poles, marsh hay, and maple syrup. A tribal member must provide his/her tribal ID card for this access, which is recorded by the county in which the collection occurs.</p> <p>Additionally, staff are aware of procedures for identifying known archaeological sites and implementing measures to protect them. Maps are protected and not for public use in order to secure locations from artifact hunters and looters. Forest management activities are coordinated with the state archaeologist and Native American tribes. Buffer lines on the ground and on management maps identify the boundary for activity prohibited within the area.</p>
<p>C3.3. Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to indigenous peoples shall be clearly identified in cooperation with such peoples, and recognized and protected by forest managers.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C3.4. Indigenous peoples shall be compensated for the application of their traditional knowledge regarding the use of forest species or management systems in forest operations. This compensation shall be formally agreed upon with their free and informed consent before forest operations commence.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>No traditional knowledge is used in the management of the FMUs.</p>
<p>P4 Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.</p>		
<p>C4.1. The communities within, or adjacent to, the forest management area should be given opportunities for employment, training, and other services.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C4.2. Forest management should meet or exceed all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families.</p>	<p>C</p>	
<p>4.2.a. The forest owner or manager meets or exceeds all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families (also see Criterion 1.1).</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>No serious injuries or fatalities were reported in the last year. Likewise, operators interviewed indicated that no injuries had occurred. Counties reported that there have been no changes in the occupational health and safety regulatory framework in the last year. Accident records for staff are maintained in personnel files, and a sample was reviewed.</p>

		<p>One county, Chippewa, reported an update to its PPE Hazard Assessment.</p> <p>Reviewed sample of training records for all county staff (e.g., Jeanette Cain (Barron County), John Cisek (Barron County)).</p>
4.2.b. The forest owner or manager and their employees and contractors demonstrate a safe work environment. Contracts or other written agreements include safety requirements.	C	<p>All employees and contractors were observed using proper PPE during the audit. Contracts reviewed for timber harvests contain safety requirements (e.g., Sawyer County Sample Timber Sale Contract, Barron Timber Sale Contract, and Washburn Contract Template). Timber contracts reviewed include stipulations to adhere to federal and state laws, including those pertaining to health and safety.</p> <p>Lincoln county reported a change to its local ATV club agreement in assisting in trail maintenance; however, this county was not sampled in 2023.</p>
4.2.c. The forest owner or manager hires well-qualified service providers to safely implement the management plan.	C	<p>All loggers interviewed had FISTA training or were also Wisconsin Master Logger certified. Records of contractors' FISTA training were viewed in county files and confirmed in the FISTA database.</p>
C4.3 The rights of workers to organize and voluntarily negotiate with their employers shall be guaranteed as outlined in Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labor Organization (ILO).	NE	
C4.4. Management planning and operations shall incorporate the results of evaluations of social impact. Consultations shall be maintained with people and groups (both men and women) directly affected by management operations.	C	
<p>4.4.a. The forest owner or manager understands the likely social impacts of management activities, and incorporates this understanding into management planning and operations. Social impacts include effects on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archeological sites and sites of cultural, historical and community significance (on and off the FMU); • Public resources, including air, water and food (hunting, fishing, collecting); • Aesthetics; • Community goals for forest and natural resource use and protection such as employment, subsistence, recreation and health; 	C	<p>County forest and DNR staff that were interviewed are aware of likely social impacts of forest management activities. Examples of incorporating the public social impacts into management planning and operations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffers are placed around the historic Native American sites in order to protect artifacts and structures. Any management near such sites is coordinated with the state archaeologist and Native American tribes. • County forests allow camping, hunting, and fishing. Firewood cutting is allowed with a permit. Implementation of Wisconsin BMPs help to protect water quality. • Aesthetic considerations in setting up harvests are common, including aesthetic buffers harvest units.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community economic opportunities; • Other people who may be affected by management operations. <p>A summary is available to the CB.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Among the community goals that county forests provide, recreational opportunities remain important. County forests work closely with recreational user groups such as ATV/UTV, snowmobile, mountain bike, horse riding, and cross-country ski clubs to ensure that ample opportunities for recreation are created while protecting natural resources. • County forests support local economic opportunities by providing employment for local community members, offering timber for bid, and offering other in-woods forestry contract work. • The county forest program considers people who may be affected by management operations. For example, neighboring landowners are alerted to harvests, tribes are invited to provide input on management planning, and county board meetings are open to the public and invite comments. <p>The comprehensive land use plan for each county includes a description of the likely social impacts of management activities and how this understanding is incorporated into management planning and operations.</p>
<p>4.4.b. The forest owner or manager seeks and considers input in management planning from people who would likely be affected by management activities.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>County board meetings and forestry committee meetings in which policies for resource management and work plans are set allow for public input. Those meetings are typically held monthly. County forest administrators are available for the public to provide feedback, and in this way they are constantly evaluating social impacts and incorporating them into management. WCFA oversaw the Wisconsin County Forest Practices Study, which evaluated facets of forest management in the state, including social impacts.</p> <p>Douglas county, which was not evaluated in 2023, reported that a citizen group expressed concerns over a proposed campground expansion at Mooney Dam Park., and that a County Board member not on Forestry Committee requested a review of Pesticide Ordinance #1.17.</p>
<p>4.4.c. People who are subject to direct adverse effects of management operations are apprised of relevant activities in advance of the action so that they may express concern.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>County board meetings and forestry committee meetings in which policies for resource management and work plans are established allow for public input. Adjacent landowners are contacted in cases when management activities occur near property boundaries or otherwise may affect use rights. County forest administrators are available to the public for people to provide feedback, and in this way they are constantly evaluating social impacts and incorporating them into management.</p>

<p>4.4.d. For public forests, consultation shall include the following components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly defined and accessible methods for public participation are provided in both long and short-term planning processes, including harvest plans and operational plans; Public notification is sufficient to allow interested stakeholders the chance to learn of upcoming opportunities for public review and/or comment on the proposed management; An accessible and affordable appeals process to planning decisions is available. <p>Planning decisions incorporate the results of public consultation. All draft and final planning documents, and their supporting data, are made readily available to the public.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>The publicly-open county board and forestry committee meetings fulfill this requirement, as well as the administrators being available to the public.</p> <p>The County Forest Law establishes mechanisms for public participation in all planning processes. Annual work plans are open for public comment as advertised in local newspapers and on each county’s website before management activities take place.</p> <p>Appeals are handled prior to plans becoming finalized to avoid conflicts; however, the public may contact their elected county representative or present information during monthly public meetings to appeal decisions. Draft and final plans are made available in county offices and on each county’s website.</p>
<p>C4.5. Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed for resolving grievances and for providing fair compensation in the case of loss or damage affecting the legal or customary rights, property, resources, or livelihoods of local peoples. Measures shall be taken to avoid such loss or damage.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>P5 Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest’s multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.</p>		
<p>C5.1. Forest management should strive toward economic viability, while taking into account the full environmental, social, and operational costs of production, and ensuring the investments necessary to maintain the ecological productivity of the forest.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C5.2. Forest management and marketing operations should encourage the optimal use and local processing of the forest’s diversity of products.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C5.3. Forest management should minimize waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C5.4. Forest management should strive to strengthen and diversify the local economy, avoiding dependence on a single forest product.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C5.5. Forest management operations shall recognize, maintain, and, where appropriate,</p>	<p>NE</p>	

<p>enhance the value of forest services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.</p>		
<p>C5.6. The rate of harvest of forest products shall not exceed levels which can be permanently sustained.</p>	C	
<p>5.6.a. In FMUs where products are being harvested, the landowner or manager calculates the sustained yield harvest level for each sustained yield planning unit, and provides clear rationale for determining the size and layout of the planning unit. The sustained yield harvest level calculation is documented in the Management Plan.</p> <p>The sustained yield harvest level calculation for each planning unit is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documented growth rates for particular sites, and/or acreage of forest types, age-classes and species distributions; • mortality and decay and other factors that affect net growth; • areas reserved from harvest or subject to harvest restrictions to meet other management goals; • silvicultural practices that will be employed on the FMU; • management objectives and desired future conditions. <p>The calculation is made by considering the effects of repeated prescribed harvests on the product/species and its ecosystem, as well as planned management treatments and projections of subsequent regrowth beyond single rotation and multiple re-entries.</p>	C	<p>Reconnaissance (recon) of land is a tool utilized in all the county forestry programs in the assessment of geographical, structural, and compositional attributes of existing resources. This field information is stored in the Wisconsin Forest Inventory & Reporting System (WisFIRS) management application. The database is used to analyze existing resources, evaluate management alternatives, and assist in the development and implementation of management plans. Recon is one tool used to assess forest resource information at the property level. All annual forest management activities that are carried out by any program (fish, wildlife, parks, endangered resources, etc.) that alter vegetation in any way (e.g., invasive species treatments, timber stand improvement, site preparation, tree planting, timber sales, and wildlife habitat management) is identified by compartment and stand within the WisFIRS database. Needs listed in the database, in addition to other multi-disciplinary input, is used in determining property budgets and annual work plans.</p> <p>Minor changes to annual harvest rates occur each year when planning is conducted for each county forest. During planning, if harvest intervals or early or late constraints are changed, the calculated annual allowable harvest changes accordingly. If harvest dates are updated on a large amount of the property, then the AAC can also be impacted.</p> <p>Harvest rates are established using area control methods and the data from WisFIRS. County forestry committees and county boards develop budgets annually, during which AAC acres are considered.</p> <p>There have been any no major adjustments in the FME’s annual allowable harvest rate. Minor changes to AAC occur each year when planning is conducted for each county forest. During planning, if harvest intervals or operating season constraints are changed, then the calculated AAC will change accordingly. Additionally, if harvest dates are updated on a large portion of any one county forest, then the AAC can also be impacted.</p> <p>2023: No major changes to AAH reported. Long-term and Annual harvest rates are adjusted annually as timber sales</p>

		are closed, new/updated recon information is presented and new calculations are run.
5.6.b. Average annual harvest levels, over rolling periods of no more than 10 years, do not exceed the calculated sustained yield harvest level.	C	<p>WCFP measures AAH in acres, and that figure varied from county to county. In sum, the AAH for the FSC-certified counties is 45,000 acres per year.</p> <p>Long-term 15-Year Average establishment harvest goals are 42,650 acres. In 2022, counties established 36,310 acres and harvested 761,987 cord equivalents.</p>
5.6.c. Rates and methods of timber harvest lead to achieving desired conditions, and improve or maintain health and quality across the FMU. Overstocked stands and stands that have been depleted or rendered to be below productive potential due to natural events, past management, or lack of management, are returned to desired stocking levels and composition at the earliest practicable time as justified in management objectives.	C	WCFP uses standard harvest scheduling established in WisFIRS for each stand type. Future entries are based on ecological goals for the site, species composition, stocking, and past management. A combination of moving harvests forward and delaying harvest is used to ensure a balanced age class distribution over time across the landscape.
5.6.d. For NTFPs, calculation of quantitative sustained yield harvest levels is required only in cases where products are harvested in significant commercial operations or where traditional or customary use rights may be impacted by such harvests. In other situations, the forest owner or manager utilizes available information, and new information that can be reasonably gathered, to set harvesting levels that will not result in a depletion of the non-timber growing stocks or other adverse effects to the forest ecosystem.	C	<p>The only significant commercial operations of NTFPs occur on counties with sphagnum moss and Christmas tree resources. Harvest areas and intervals are established based on data from past years that show how quickly the resource can recover.</p> <p>Other NTFPs are small scale and are controlled and harvest volumes monitored through issuing permits (e.g., Christmas trees, firewood). Permits are also issued to tribal members for gathering of boughs, tree bark, lodge poles, marsh hay, jack pine stumps, and maple syrup.</p> <p>None of the NTFPs are sold as FSC-certified.</p>
P6 Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.		
C6.1. Assessments of environmental impacts shall be completed -- appropriate to the scale, intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources -- and adequately integrated into management systems. Assessments shall include landscape level considerations as well as the impacts of on-site processing facilities. Environmental impacts shall be assessed prior to commencement of site-disturbing operations.	NE	
C 6.2. Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and	C	

<p>their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas). Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. Inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping, and collecting shall be controlled.</p>		
<p>6.2.a. If there is a likely presence of RTE species as identified in Indicator 6.1.a then either a field survey to verify the species' presence or absence is conducted prior to site-disturbing management activities, or management occurs with the assumption that potential RTE species are present.</p> <p>Surveys are conducted by biologists with the appropriate expertise in the species of interest and with appropriate qualifications to conduct the surveys. If a species is determined to be present, its location should be reported to the manager of the appropriate database.</p>	C	<p>The Wisconsin NHI database is consulted prior to all forest management activities, and the results are documents in Timber Sale Notice and Cutting Reports. Foresters work in consultation with DNR Wildlife and NHC staff to address any occurrences in order to ensure protection. Additional site surveys for species often conduct additional site surveys for species if the NHI database indicates the need. Sites visited during the audit included protection measures in place for RTE species to avoid the risk of impacts of forest management activities.</p> <p>In 2023, the FME reported the following surveys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goshawk surveys in the Clark County. • Red-shouldered Hawk surveys on Oconto, Brown and Florence County Forest. • Kirtland’s Warbler surveys on Vilas and Jackson County Forest • Dwarf bilberry survey on Marinette County Forest • Rare and endangered butterfly surveys on Eau Claire and Jackson County forest that included surveys for regal fritillary, frosted elfin, KBB, gorgone checkerspot, dusted skippers, phlox moths, and cobweb skippers. • Rare plant survey on Jackson, Juneau, Marinette, and Forest County Forest
<p>6.2.b. When RTE species are present or assumed to be present, modifications in management are made in order to maintain, restore or enhance the extent, quality and viability of the species and their habitats. Conservation zones and/or protected areas are established for RTE species, including those S3 species that are considered rare, where they are necessary to maintain or improve the short and long-term viability of the species. Conservation measures are based on relevant science, guidelines and/or consultation with relevant, independent experts as necessary to achieve the conservation goal of the Indicator.</p>	C	<p>In addition, Rare Plant Monitoring Program volunteers searched for rare plants on these county sites: Washburn, Barron, Jackson, Juneau, Clark, Chippewa, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, and Lincoln.</p> <p>561 timber sales on over 37,948 acres of timber sales were completed on FSC counties in CY22- The Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) is consulted prior to forest management activities. Foresters work in consultation with Wildlife and NHC staff to address any occurrences. Forestry, wildlife and NHC staffs often conduct additional site surveys for species if the NHI database indicates the need. The NHI system allows for reporting of any additional occurrences by a variety of staff. Impacts to RTE species is</p>

		documented in timber sale files and the timber sale cutting notice (Form 2460-001).
6.2.c. For medium and large public forests (e.g. state forests), forest management plans and operations are designed to meet species' recovery goals, as well as landscape level biodiversity conservation goals.	C	The US Fish and Wildlife Service has developed statewide Habitat Conservation Plans for several species (e.g., Karner Blue Butterfly). Funding of is provided to county forests by the DNR to perform habitat improvement work, which can be used for game or non-game species. Most recently, FME has engaged with USFWS and other organizations in the Great Lakes region on the Bat HCP, which is to help conserve cave-dwelling bat species. The FME is waiting for the Wisconsin DNR to follow up on this issue.
6.2.d. Within the capacity of the forest owner or manager, hunting, fishing, trapping, collecting and other activities are controlled to avoid the risk of impacts to vulnerable species and communities (See Criterion 1.5).	C	Activities that may impact RTE species may be conducted under the authority of a broad or site-specific incidental take permit as approved by the DNR. Sites visited included protection measures in place for RTE species to avoid the risk of impacts of forest management activities. 2023: Management activities that impact RTE species and habitats occur regularly. Management activities are planned and carried out with consultation from wildlife and/or NHC staff and using species specific guidelines applied to local conditions to mitigate potential impact to RTE species and habitats. Additionally, activities that may impact RTE species may be conducted under the authority of a broad or site-specific incidental take permit as approved by the DNR.
C6.3. Ecological functions and values shall be maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including: a) Forest regeneration and succession. b) Genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity. c) Natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.	C	-
6.3.a.1. The forest owner or manager maintains, enhances, and/or restores under-represented successional stages in the FMU that would naturally occur on the types of sites found on the FMU. Where old growth of different community types that would naturally occur on the forest are under-represented in the landscape relative to natural conditions, a portion of the forest is managed to enhance and/or restore old growth characteristics.	C	Assessments of under-represented, naturally-occurring successional stages occur during comprehensive land use planning processes and annual reconnaissance surveys. Specific FMU goals for management of these areas are described in each county's comprehensive land use plan and/or in annual work plans. Some of these areas are considered as HCV. In 2023, assessments of under-represented, naturally occurring successional stages occur during comprehensive land use planning processes . Specific property goals for management of these areas are described in the comprehensive plan and/or in annual work plans. The DNR has developed some species-specific analysis of forest cover types, which are available on the DNR webpage.

<p>6.3.a.2. When a rare ecological community is present, modifications are made in both the management plan and its implementation in order to maintain, restore or enhance the viability of the community. Based on the vulnerability of the existing community, conservation zones and/or protected areas are established where warranted.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Some of the counties and sites visited during the 2023 audit include ecosystems which not only are rare but also support RTE species. Common modifications included no-entry buffer strips and green tree retention areas.</p> <p>Interviews with DNR ecologist on Washburn County indicates that one site specific management opportunity detailed in the 15-year plan is the “Fire Tower Lane Oak Savannah Site”, which is within the McKenzie IRMU (Page 3000.8-14, item #14).</p>
<p>6.3.a.3. When they are present, management maintains the area, structure, composition, and processes of all Type 1 and Type 2 old growth. Type 1 and 2 old growth are also protected and buffered as necessary with conservation zones, unless an alternative plan is developed that provides greater overall protection of old growth values.</p> <p>Type 1 Old Growth is protected from harvesting and road construction. Type 1 old growth is also protected from other timber management activities, except as needed to maintain the ecological values associated with the stand, including old growth attributes (e.g., remove exotic species, conduct controlled burning, and thinning from below in dry forest types when and where restoration is appropriate).</p> <p>Type 2 Old Growth is protected from harvesting to the extent necessary to maintain the area, structures, and functions of the stand. Timber harvest in Type 2 old growth must maintain old growth structures, functions, and components including individual trees that function as refugia (see Indicator 6.3.g).</p> <p>On public lands, old growth is protected from harvesting, as well as from other timber management activities, except if needed to maintain the values associated with the stand (e.g., remove exotic species, conduct controlled burning, and thinning from below in forest types when and where restoration is appropriate).</p> <p>On American Indian lands, timber harvest may be permitted in Type 1 and Type 2 old growth in recognition of their sovereignty and unique</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Relict old growth stands (Type 1) are typed as reserved; there is no active management except for protection from invasive species. In managed old growth stands, any forest management is conducted primarily to maintain or enhance old growth characteristics. Only one of these stands has a planned treatment and that is not until 2099.</p> <p>In 2023, the FME reported no new old growth sites discovered through field reconnaissance.</p>

<p>ownership. Timber harvest is permitted in situations where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Old growth forests comprise a significant portion of the tribal ownership. 2. A history of forest stewardship by the tribe exists. 3. High Conservation Value Forest attributes are maintained. 4. Old-growth structures are maintained. 5. Conservation zones representative of old growth stands are established. 6. Landscape level considerations are addressed. 7. Rare species are protected. 		
<p>6.3.b. To the extent feasible within the size of the ownership, particularly on larger ownerships (generally tens of thousands or more acres), management maintains, enhances, or restores habitat conditions suitable for well-distributed populations of animal species that are characteristic of forest ecosystems within the landscape.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>DNR wildlife biologists work with liaison foresters and county forest administrators to plan and carry out projects for wildlife habitat improvement.</p> <p>Some recent examples of efforts to benefit wildlife include the Young Forest Initiative, barrens restoration and management, grouse/woodcock habitat enhancement, and turkey habitat enhancement. Projects are often conducted in partnership with other groups including Ruffed Grouse Society, National Wild Turkey Federation, and US Fish and Wildlife Service.</p> <p>2023: DNR wildlife biologists work with liaison foresters and county forest administrators to plan and carry out projects for wildlife habitat improvement. Funding of \$.05/acre is provided to county forests by the DNR to perform habitat improvement work. Additionally, individual biologists, foresters, and county forest administrators pursue additional projects for the benefit of wildlife at a local level. Some recent examples of efforts to benefit wildlife include Young Forest Initiative, barrens restoration and management, grouse/woodcock habitat, Kirtland’s Warbler habitat, turkey habitat, etc. Projects are often conducted in partnership with other groups including ruffed grouse society, wild turkey federation, USFWS, etc.</p>
<p>6.3.c. Management maintains, enhances and/or restores the plant and wildlife habitat of Riparian Management Zones (RMZs) to provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) habitat for aquatic species that breed in surrounding uplands; b) habitat for predominantly terrestrial species that breed in adjacent aquatic habitats; c) habitat for species that use riparian areas for feeding, cover, and travel; 	<p>C</p>	<p>Forest management activities regularly occur near riparian and other wetland areas. <i>Wisconsin’s Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality</i> are followed when conducting management near these areas. BMP, soil disturbance, and ephemeral pond monitoring projects are conducted on county forest lands by the DNR forest hydrologist.</p> <p>2023: There were 561 acres of timber sales completed in CY22 on FSC lands. Sales with riparian zones, including crossings are documented on each/every sale have specific</p>

<p>d) habitat for plant species associated with riparian areas; and, e) stream shading and inputs of wood and leaf litter into the adjacent aquatic ecosystem.</p>		<p>measures in place for the sales and follow the Wisconsin BMPs Water Quality guidelines. Forest management activities regularly occur near riparian areas. Wisconsin BMPs for Water Quality are followed when conducting management near riparian areas. BMP, soil disturbance, and ephemeral pond monitoring projects are conducted on county forest lands by the DNR forest hydrologist.</p>								
<p>Stand-scale Indicators 6.3.d Management practices maintain or enhance plant species composition, distribution and frequency of occurrence similar to those that would naturally occur on the site.</p>	C	<p>The harvests observed in 2019 are consistent the natural disturbance regimes that would maintain conditions for the species groups found on those sites. For example, aspen regeneration harvests mimic wind and fire events that would naturally keep aspen on the landscape. Oak thinnings and northern hardwood selections harvests are consistent with wind throw and natural mortality events that would promote the growth of healthy trees.</p>								
<p>6.3.e. When planting is required, a local source of known provenance is used when available and when the local source is equivalent in terms of quality, price and productivity. The use of non-local sources shall be justified, such as in situations where other management objectives (e.g. disease resistance or adapting to climate change) are best served by non-local sources. Native species suited to the site are normally selected for regeneration.</p>	C	<p>When planting is required, seed sources predominantly come from areas around the state’s nurseries. Some counties send local seed sources to out-of-state nurseries to be container grown. In some cases, local seed sources are not available for use; in those cases, the next seed source is utilized. FME provided records of seed sources for each county that planted in the last year.</p> <p>In 2023, the following counties reported assisted regeneration activities:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="813 1083 1515 1837"> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1083 1515 1314"> <p>Bayfield: The jack pine seed used for aerial seeding was from the WI DNR Hayward nursery, which is seed sourced from northwest Wisconsin. White pine and red pine were planted. Planting stock was obtained from PRT. The seed source for the white pine was PE20-L002, which was Bayfield County, WI, Blue Lot 2020 Crop. The seed source for the red pine was Ontario, from Zone 37, north of Lake Erie.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1314 1515 1476"> <p>Douglas: 110,000 1+0 red pine seedlings grown in Ontario, Canada PRT nursery, regionally sourced ecoprovince 212 seed. 30,000 1+0 white spruce seedlings grown in Ontario, Canada PRT nursery, regionally sourced ecoprovince 212 seed.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1476 1515 1541"> <p>Florence: WDNR trees seedlings are used, and seed for roads and trails is purchased through local co-op.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1541 1515 1606"> <p>Juneau: All local- WI DNR Tree Nursery for seedlings and jack pine seed.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1606 1515 1671"> <p>Lincoln: White spruce seedlings were planted last spring grown in Wisconsin DNR nursery.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1671 1515 1736"> <p>Oconto: PRT USA Inc. c/o PRT Brighton Nursey 4653 Bishop Lake Rd Howell MI 48843</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1736 1515 1772"> <p>Sawyer: School tree planting sourced from WDNR nursery</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1772 1515 1837"> <p>Taylor: Containerized Red Pine from PRT Nursery. Seed source is Northern WI and Northern MN.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Bayfield: The jack pine seed used for aerial seeding was from the WI DNR Hayward nursery, which is seed sourced from northwest Wisconsin. White pine and red pine were planted. Planting stock was obtained from PRT. The seed source for the white pine was PE20-L002, which was Bayfield County, WI, Blue Lot 2020 Crop. The seed source for the red pine was Ontario, from Zone 37, north of Lake Erie.</p>	<p>Douglas: 110,000 1+0 red pine seedlings grown in Ontario, Canada PRT nursery, regionally sourced ecoprovince 212 seed. 30,000 1+0 white spruce seedlings grown in Ontario, Canada PRT nursery, regionally sourced ecoprovince 212 seed.</p>	<p>Florence: WDNR trees seedlings are used, and seed for roads and trails is purchased through local co-op.</p>	<p>Juneau: All local- WI DNR Tree Nursery for seedlings and jack pine seed.</p>	<p>Lincoln: White spruce seedlings were planted last spring grown in Wisconsin DNR nursery.</p>	<p>Oconto: PRT USA Inc. c/o PRT Brighton Nursey 4653 Bishop Lake Rd Howell MI 48843</p>	<p>Sawyer: School tree planting sourced from WDNR nursery</p>	<p>Taylor: Containerized Red Pine from PRT Nursery. Seed source is Northern WI and Northern MN.</p>
<p>Bayfield: The jack pine seed used for aerial seeding was from the WI DNR Hayward nursery, which is seed sourced from northwest Wisconsin. White pine and red pine were planted. Planting stock was obtained from PRT. The seed source for the white pine was PE20-L002, which was Bayfield County, WI, Blue Lot 2020 Crop. The seed source for the red pine was Ontario, from Zone 37, north of Lake Erie.</p>										
<p>Douglas: 110,000 1+0 red pine seedlings grown in Ontario, Canada PRT nursery, regionally sourced ecoprovince 212 seed. 30,000 1+0 white spruce seedlings grown in Ontario, Canada PRT nursery, regionally sourced ecoprovince 212 seed.</p>										
<p>Florence: WDNR trees seedlings are used, and seed for roads and trails is purchased through local co-op.</p>										
<p>Juneau: All local- WI DNR Tree Nursery for seedlings and jack pine seed.</p>										
<p>Lincoln: White spruce seedlings were planted last spring grown in Wisconsin DNR nursery.</p>										
<p>Oconto: PRT USA Inc. c/o PRT Brighton Nursey 4653 Bishop Lake Rd Howell MI 48843</p>										
<p>Sawyer: School tree planting sourced from WDNR nursery</p>										
<p>Taylor: Containerized Red Pine from PRT Nursery. Seed source is Northern WI and Northern MN.</p>										

<p>6.3.f. Management maintains, enhances, or restores habitat components and associated stand structures, in abundance and distribution that could be expected from naturally occurring processes. These components include: a) large live trees, live trees with decay or declining health, snags, and well-distributed coarse down and dead woody material. Legacy trees where present are not harvested; and b) vertical and horizontal complexity. Trees selected for retention are generally representative of the dominant species found on the site.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Completed harvests observed contained snags left, as well as some legacy trees such as conifers within aspen regeneration harvests. Also observed were retained den and cavity trees.</p>
<p>6.3.g.1 In the Southeast, Appalachia, Ozark-Ouachita, Mississippi Alluvial Valley, and Pacific Coast Regions, when even-aged systems are employed, and during salvage harvests, live trees and other native vegetation are retained within the harvest unit as described in Appendix C for the applicable region.</p> <p>In the Lake States Northeast, Rocky Mountain and Southwest Regions, when even-aged silvicultural systems are employed, and during salvage harvests, live trees and other native vegetation are retained within the harvest unit in a proportion and configuration that is consistent with the characteristic natural disturbance regime unless retention at a lower level is necessary for the purposes of restoration or rehabilitation. See Appendix C for additional regional requirements and guidance.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>When even-aged harvests are conducted, guidelines for green tree retention areas, biomass harvesting, course woody debris are followed, as confirmed in field observation. These guidelines are intended to represent a proportion and configuration that is consistent with the characteristic natural disturbance regime.</p> <p>2023: There was 21,323 acres comprised of a host of silvicultural treatments employed: Coppice, Clearcut-natural seeding, Seedtree, Shelterwoods, Overstory removals, Clearcut-direct planting for regen. No issues meeting live, standing or downed dead woody debris retentions.</p>
<p>6.3.g.2 Under very limited situations, the landowner or manager has the option to develop a qualified plan to allow minor departure from the opening size limits described in Indicator 6.3.g.1. A qualified plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is developed by qualified experts in ecological and/or related fields (wildlife biology, hydrology, landscape ecology, forestry/silviculture). 2. Is based on the totality of the best available information including peer-reviewed science regarding natural disturbance regimes for the FMU. 	<p>C</p>	<p>There are no additional restrictions on even-aged management for the Lake States-Central Hardwoods region.</p>

<p>3. Is spatially and temporally explicit and includes maps of proposed openings or areas.</p> <p>4. Demonstrates that the variations will result in equal or greater benefit to wildlife, water quality, and other values compared to the normal opening size limits, including for sensitive and rare species.</p> <p>5. Is reviewed by independent experts in wildlife biology, hydrology, and landscape ecology, to confirm the preceding findings.</p>							
<p>6.3.h. The forest owner or manager assesses the risk of, prioritizes, and, as warranted, develops and implements a strategy to prevent or control invasive species, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a method to determine the extent of invasive species and the degree of threat to native species and ecosystems; 2. implementation of management practices that minimize the risk of invasive establishment, growth, and spread; 3. eradication or control of established invasive populations when feasible: and, 4. monitoring of control measures and management practices to assess their effectiveness in preventing or controlling invasive species. 	<p>C</p>	<p>The threat of invasive species varies between counties, and each of the counties visited in 2019 have active invasive species control programs.</p> <p>In 2023, the following counties reported invasive species control activities:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="813 835 1529 1841"> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 835 1529 905">Ashland: Hand pulling and herbicide applications for garlic mustard and buckthorn</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 905 1529 940">Barron: Buckthorn Control.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 940 1529 1104">Bayfield: 400+ acres of invasives recon and mapping. Began work on an invasives management plan for the forest. Treated 14 acres of Black Locust, 59 acres of Common Buckthorn and 15 acres Multiflora Rose. 44 miles (267 acres) of knapweed treatments.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1104 1529 1199">Chippewa: Spot sprayed garlic mustard along ATV trail, Hickory Ridge ditches and Ice Age Trail Pine Plantation. Spot sprayed wild chervil along the Old Abe Trail.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="813 1199 1529 1841">Clark: Clark County follows a "Clark County Forest Invasive Plant Plan" that is included in the 15-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the county. Foresters and other department staff monitor for invasive species year-round. When found, sites are added to our invasive species GIS layer. Annually during the months of April thru July the department spends 14-21 days treating invasive species focusing on high traffic areas (i.e. rec trails, forest roads, landings, etc.). Treatment information is tracked in our GIS database. Treated sites remain in the GIS database and are continually monitored. As of December 31, 2022; 258 occurrences have been documented. 4 new sites were discovered in 2022. Nearly every documented invasive occurrence is associated with human vectors and most are concentrated in high use recreational areas. Herbicide treatments to control Spotted Knapweed, Leafy Spurge, Cypress Spurge, Japanese Honeysuckle, Purple Loosestrife, Garlic Mustard, Buckthorn, and several others began in 2004 and continued through 2022. These treatments have helped contain the spread of invasives and reduced their intensity in the treated areas.</td> </tr> </table>	Ashland: Hand pulling and herbicide applications for garlic mustard and buckthorn	Barron: Buckthorn Control.	Bayfield: 400+ acres of invasives recon and mapping. Began work on an invasives management plan for the forest. Treated 14 acres of Black Locust, 59 acres of Common Buckthorn and 15 acres Multiflora Rose. 44 miles (267 acres) of knapweed treatments.	Chippewa: Spot sprayed garlic mustard along ATV trail, Hickory Ridge ditches and Ice Age Trail Pine Plantation. Spot sprayed wild chervil along the Old Abe Trail.	Clark: Clark County follows a "Clark County Forest Invasive Plant Plan" that is included in the 15-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the county. Foresters and other department staff monitor for invasive species year-round. When found, sites are added to our invasive species GIS layer. Annually during the months of April thru July the department spends 14-21 days treating invasive species focusing on high traffic areas (i.e. rec trails, forest roads, landings, etc.). Treatment information is tracked in our GIS database. Treated sites remain in the GIS database and are continually monitored. As of December 31, 2022; 258 occurrences have been documented. 4 new sites were discovered in 2022. Nearly every documented invasive occurrence is associated with human vectors and most are concentrated in high use recreational areas. Herbicide treatments to control Spotted Knapweed, Leafy Spurge, Cypress Spurge, Japanese Honeysuckle, Purple Loosestrife, Garlic Mustard, Buckthorn, and several others began in 2004 and continued through 2022. These treatments have helped contain the spread of invasives and reduced their intensity in the treated areas.
Ashland: Hand pulling and herbicide applications for garlic mustard and buckthorn							
Barron: Buckthorn Control.							
Bayfield: 400+ acres of invasives recon and mapping. Began work on an invasives management plan for the forest. Treated 14 acres of Black Locust, 59 acres of Common Buckthorn and 15 acres Multiflora Rose. 44 miles (267 acres) of knapweed treatments.							
Chippewa: Spot sprayed garlic mustard along ATV trail, Hickory Ridge ditches and Ice Age Trail Pine Plantation. Spot sprayed wild chervil along the Old Abe Trail.							
Clark: Clark County follows a "Clark County Forest Invasive Plant Plan" that is included in the 15-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the county. Foresters and other department staff monitor for invasive species year-round. When found, sites are added to our invasive species GIS layer. Annually during the months of April thru July the department spends 14-21 days treating invasive species focusing on high traffic areas (i.e. rec trails, forest roads, landings, etc.). Treatment information is tracked in our GIS database. Treated sites remain in the GIS database and are continually monitored. As of December 31, 2022; 258 occurrences have been documented. 4 new sites were discovered in 2022. Nearly every documented invasive occurrence is associated with human vectors and most are concentrated in high use recreational areas. Herbicide treatments to control Spotted Knapweed, Leafy Spurge, Cypress Spurge, Japanese Honeysuckle, Purple Loosestrife, Garlic Mustard, Buckthorn, and several others began in 2004 and continued through 2022. These treatments have helped contain the spread of invasives and reduced their intensity in the treated areas.							

		<p>Douglas: No treatments occurred. Standard BMP's have been utilized in forestry operations for prevention measures.</p> <p>Eau Claire: NHC has done about 125 acres of leafy spurge control at both the Canoe Landing SNA and Coon Forks SNA. Forestry has practiced preventative measure on all sales. Examples are requiring equipment to be cleaned before moving on site and when moving off site and surveying the sale area during the establishment phase for any invasives.</p> <p>Florence: Hand pulling of Garlic mustard in one location.</p> <p>Forest: Spot Treatment of black locust</p> <p>Iron: Spot treatments of Garlic Mustard along some roadways and individual buckthorn plants. Following Invasive Species BMP recommendations to reduce introduction and spread.</p> <p>Jackson: Hand pulling garlic mustard, chemical treatment of buckthorn.</p> <p>Juneau: Targeted treatment of garlic mustard, some mulitflora rose, honeysuckle, burdock and a few autumn olive at Bass Hollow Recreation Area of Juneau County Forests. Treatment completed by NatureWorks, LLC</p> <p>Lincoln: Seasonal timber sale restrictions, requiring areas with invasives be harvested last, limit soil disturbance by contractor, attempt to carefully cover invasives on main access road to timber sale, road and trail inspections, and ongoing herbicide spraying of garlic mustard infected areas.</p> <p>Oconto: All equipment working on Oconto County Forest is required to arrive on the property clean & free of debris. Invasive species are treated prior to timber sale activity when located on skid trails & phragmites located within or adjacent to timber harvests in wetlands are treated prior to timber sale activity. Invasive plant species inventory is an on-going process all year-round with locations & amounts recorded and entered into a single ArcMap project with notes including treatment dates. Invasive species control took place for the following species: Phragmites, Honeysuckle, Black Locust, Buckthorn, Garlic Mustard, Nipplewart, Ornamental Bittersweet, Autumn Olive, spotted knapweed & a variety of other species. Cut stump & foliar where the most common treatment methods used along with hand pulling. Wisconsin DNR staff, Timberland Invasive Partnership, & Private contractors were all utilized. Retreatments will continue in 2023 & beyond. Approximately \$10,000 in invasive species contracts were completed in 2022 and at least \$20,200 will be awarded in 2023-2024. Approximately \$3,500 was spent feconning buckthorn in 2022.</p> <p>Oneida: Eradication/control continues on two small patches of garlic mustard. Control measures included hand pulling and herbicide applications.</p> <p>Price: Treated garlic mustard plants - Put up trail closed signs and fence posts to prevent traffic down a woods road with garlic mustard. Pulled random buckthorn plants.</p> <p>Taylor: Mechanical control of buckthorn and honeysuckle.</p>
--	--	---

		Wood: Buckthorn treatments
6.3.i. In applicable situations, the forest owner or manager identifies and applies site-specific fuels management practices, based on: (1) natural fire regimes, (2) risk of wildfire, (3) potential economic losses, (4) public safety, and (5) applicable laws and regulations.	C	<p>Most prescribed burns in Wisconsin are conducted for wildlife habitat purposes. Counties work with the DNR to complete burn plans and coordinate burns on county forests. Barrens management, red oak regeneration, and suppressing woody vegetation in grasslands are common objectives for prescribed fire.</p> <p>2023: 22.2 acres in 18 wildfires for CY22 within FSC counties. 20 Prescribed burns for 2319 acres CY22.</p>
C6.4. Representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape shall be protected in their natural state and recorded on maps, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations and the uniqueness of the affected resources.	NE	
C6.5. Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to control erosion; minimize forest damage during harvesting, road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances; and to protect water resources.	C	
6.5.a. The forest owner or manager has written guidelines outlining conformance with the Indicators of this Criterion.	C	WCFP uses BMPs developed by the Wisconsin DNR (<i>Wisconsin’s Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality, PUB FR-093-2010</i>). Per the DNR <i>Timber Sale Handbook</i> (No. 2461), BMPs are mandatory on those county forests that are certified to the FSC FM Standard.
6.5.b. Forest operations meet or exceed Best Management Practices (BMPs) that address components of the Criterion where the operation takes place.	C	<p>All sites evaluated by the 2023 audit team showed the implementation of BMPs, including properly constructed water bars, water crossings, and slashed trails.</p> <p>See OBS 2023.1.</p>
6.5.c. Management activities including site preparation, harvest prescriptions, techniques, timing, and equipment are selected and used to protect soil and water resources and to avoid erosion, landslides, and significant soil disturbance. Logging and other activities that significantly increase the risk of landslides are excluded in areas where risk of landslides is high. The following actions are addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slash is concentrated only as much as necessary to achieve the goals of site preparation and the reduction of fuels to moderate or low levels of fire hazard. • Disturbance of topsoil is limited to the minimum necessary to achieve successful regeneration of species native to the site. 	C	Wisconsin BMPs form the base for conformance to this indicator. The 2023 audit team saw good compliance to BMPs during the audit: slash was evenly distributed on an aspen regen harvests to encourage nutrient retention; there was no sign of equipment or logging slash in vernal pools; disturbance of topsoil was minimal; water bars were installed properly and functioning correctly; and water crossings for appropriately designed.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rutting and compaction is minimized. • Soil erosion is not accelerated. • Burning is only done when consistent with natural disturbance regimes. • Natural ground cover disturbance is minimized to the extent necessary to achieve regeneration objectives. • Whole tree harvesting on any site over multiple rotations is only done when research indicates soil productivity will not be harmed. • Low impact equipment and technologies is used where appropriate. 		
<p>6.5.d. The transportation system, including design and placement of permanent and temporary haul roads, skid trails, recreational trails, water crossings and landings, is designed, constructed, maintained, and/or reconstructed to reduce short and long-term environmental impacts, habitat fragmentation, soil and water disturbance and cumulative adverse effects, while allowing for customary uses and use rights. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to all roads and trails (temporary and permanent), including recreational trails, and off-road travel, is controlled, as possible, to minimize ecological impacts; • road density is minimized; • erosion is minimized; • sediment discharge to streams is minimized; • there is free upstream and downstream passage for aquatic organisms; • impacts of transportation systems on wildlife habitat and migration corridors are minimized; • area converted to roads, landings and skid trails is minimized; • habitat fragmentation is minimized; • unneeded roads are closed and rehabilitated. 	C	<p>Counties follow Wisconsin BMPs, which address many of these issues. The road systems observed were in good condition with permanent roads crowned to shed precipitation and rolling dips. Logging trails had well-constructed waterbars. Harvest areas were designed to minimize road infrastructure, and crossing of streams was limited. Crossings that were observed were well constructed with no erosion evident.</p>
<p>6.5.e.1. In consultation with appropriate expertise, the forest owner or manager implements written Streamside Management Zone (SMZ) buffer management guidelines that are adequate for preventing environmental impact, and include protecting and restoring</p>	C	<p>Riparian Management Zones (RMZs) are described in Wisconsin’s BMP manual. The manual includes the application of BMPs in wetland environments, including recommended vegetative buffer widths. The BMP manual includes examples of RMZ widths for common situations, such as even-aged aspen harvests.</p>

<p>water quality, hydrologic conditions in rivers and stream corridors, wetlands, vernal pools, seeps and springs, lake and pond shorelines, and other hydrologically sensitive areas. The guidelines include vegetative buffer widths and protection measures that are acceptable within those buffers.</p> <p>In the Appalachia, Ozark-Ouachita, Southeast, Mississippi Alluvial Valley, Southwest, Rocky Mountain, and Pacific Coast regions, there are requirements for minimum SMZ widths and explicit limitations on the activities that can occur within those SMZs. These are outlined as requirements in Appendix E.</p>		
<p>6.5.e.2. Minor variations from the stated minimum SMZ widths and layout for specific stream segments, wetlands and other water bodies are permitted in limited circumstances, provided the forest owner or manager demonstrates that the alternative configuration maintains the overall extent of the buffers and provides equivalent or greater environmental protection than FSC-US regional requirements for those stream segments, water quality, and aquatic species, based on site-specific conditions and the best available information. The forest owner or manager develops a written set of supporting information including a description of the riparian habitats and species addressed in the alternative configuration. The CB must verify that the variations meet these requirements, based on the input of an independent expert in aquatic ecology or closely related field.</p>	C	All RMZ buffer widths observed during the 2023 audit were consistent with those recommended by Wisconsin’s BMP manual.
<p>6.5.f. Stream and wetland crossings are avoided when possible. Unavoidable crossings are located and constructed to minimize impacts on water quality, hydrology, and fragmentation of aquatic habitat. Crossings do not impede the movement of aquatic species. Temporary crossings are restored to original hydrological conditions when operations are finished.</p>	C	Wisconsin’s BMP manual covers stream crossings with specific examples. The recommended specifications described in the manual are in line with this indicator. Field sites visited in 2019 showed adherence with BMPs. No impediments to aquatic organisms were observed. Timber mats and/or woody debris are typically used to cross sensitive areas, and examples of both were observed.
<p>6.5.g. Recreation use on the FMU is managed to avoid negative impacts to soils, water, plants, wildlife and wildlife habitats.</p>	C	BMPs are designed with compatible multiple uses in mind. Recreation trails such as ATV/UTV and mountain bike trails are constructed to minimize negative impacts to soils, water, plants, wildlife, and wildlife habitats.

<p>6.5.h. Grazing by domesticated animals is controlled to protect in-stream habitats and water quality, the species composition and viability of the riparian vegetation, and the banks of the stream channel from erosion.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>No grazing with domesticated animals is permitted on county forests.</p>
<p>C6.6. Management systems shall promote the development and adoption of environmentally friendly non-chemical methods of pest management and strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides. World Health Organization Type 1A and 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides; pesticides that are persistent, toxic or whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use; as well as any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited. If chemicals are used, proper equipment and training shall be provided to minimize health and environmental risks.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C6.7. Chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non-organic wastes including fuel and oil shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at off-site locations.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C6.8. Use of biological control agents shall be documented, minimized, monitored, and strictly controlled in accordance with national laws and internationally accepted scientific protocols. Use of genetically modified organisms shall be prohibited.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C6.9. The use of exotic species shall be carefully controlled and actively monitored to avoid adverse ecological impacts.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>6.9.a. The use of <i>exotic species</i> is contingent on the availability of credible scientific data indicating that any such species is non-invasive and its application does not pose a risk to native biodiversity.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>With the exception of limited biocontrol agents such as the beetles described in Indicator 6.8.c and erosion control plant species, exotic species are generally not used on the FMUs for commercial or management purposes. No updates were reported in 2023.</p>
<p>6.9.b. If exotic species are used, their provenance and the location of their use are documented, and their ecological effects are actively monitored.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p><i>Wisconsin Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality</i> (Appendix D) lists non-native species suitable for cover crops for short term erosion control. <i>Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for Invasive Species Field Manual</i> (Appendix H) lists species recommended for revegetation.</p>
<p>6.9.c The forest owner or manager shall take timely action to curtail or significantly reduce any adverse impacts resulting from their use of exotic species</p>	<p>C</p>	

		<p>Wisconsin DNR analyzed the risk of using non-native species listed in these BMP manuals. County staff follow the guidelines from this evaluation, which indicated low risk of invasiveness and low risk of establishment of a seed bank.</p>
<p>C6.10. Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion: a) Entails a very limited portion of the forest management unit; and b) Does not occur on High Conservation Value Forest areas; and c) Will enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, long-term conservation benefits across the forest management unit.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>P7 A management plan -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations -- shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long-term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.</p>		
<p>C7.1. The management plan and supporting documents shall provide: a) Management objectives. b) description of the forest resources to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands. c) Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories. d) Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection. e) Provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics. f) Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments. g) Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species. h) Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership. i) Description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C7.2. The management plan shall be periodically revised to incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.</p>	<p>NE</p>	

<p>C7.3. Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plans.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>C7.4. While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the primary elements of the management plan, including those listed in Criterion 7.1.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>P8 Monitoring shall be conducted -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management -- to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.</p>		
<p>C8.1. The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be determined by the scale and intensity of forest management operations, as well as, the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment. Monitoring procedures should be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.</p>	<p>C</p>	
<p>8.1.a Consistent with the scale and intensity of management, the forest owner or manager develops and consistently implements a regular, comprehensive, and replicable written monitoring protocol.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Most of the required monitoring is part of the forest compartment reconnaissance (recon), described in detail in the <i>WDNR Public Forest Lands Handbook</i>. WisFIRS provides a system for recording monitoring information per DNR-established protocols. Other elements of the monitoring system include field manuals for forest inventory (reconnaissance), and studies commissioned by DNR, the legislature or other bodies. Monitoring strategy is described <i>WDNR Public Forest Lands Handbook</i> and recorded in WisFIRS.</p> <p>Some counties also have an annual accomplishment and work plan in which data and information for the prior year is included, and the next year’s work plan is presented. Other counties create a separate annual report to present monitoring results (and also have a separate work plan). Each County and DNR also hold an Annual Partnership Meeting Minutes to review monitoring and planned activities. Reviewed 2022 annual accomplishment and work plans and County/DNR Annual Partnership Meeting minutes for Sawyer, Barron, and Washburn Counties in 2023.</p>
<p>8.2. Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor, at a minimum, the following indicators: a) yield of all forest products harvested, b) growth rates, regeneration, and condition of the forest, c) composition and</p>	<p>C</p>	

<p>observed changes in the flora and fauna, d) environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations, and e) cost, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.</p>		
<p>8.2.a.1. For all commercially harvested products, an inventory system is maintained. The inventory system includes at a minimum: a) species, b) volumes, c) stocking, d) regeneration, and e) stand and forest composition and structure; and f) timber quality.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>WisFIRS is a comprehensive system for guiding the reconnaissance and inventory of forest compartments as well as for scheduling harvest and other management options of stands. All of the elements listed in this indicator are included in the <i>Wisconsin DNR Public Forest Lands Handbook</i> (No. 2460.5).</p> <p>In 2023, the FME reported that 761,987 cord equivalents (CY22) were harvested. CY22-Forest reconnaissance updates occurred on 193,883 acres (10.9% of all FSC lands WisFIRS Rpt 115). This includes but not limited to updates for stocking, volume growth, regeneration surveys, post-timber sale evaluations.</p>
<p>8.2.a.2. Significant, unanticipated removal or loss or increased vulnerability of forest resources is monitored and recorded. Recorded information shall include date and location of occurrence, description of disturbance, extent and severity of loss, and may be both quantitative and qualitative.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>No significant, unanticipated removal or loss or increased vulnerability of forest resources has occurred in the last year in the counties sampled. If such a loss were to occur, data would be gathered by a special reconnaissance inventory and entered into WisFIRS before annual updates of harvest scheduling.</p>
<p>8.2.b The forest owner or manager maintains records of harvested timber and NTFPs (volume and product and/or grade). Records must adequately ensure that the requirements under Criterion 5.6 are met.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Harvest volumes are entered into WisFIRS before annual harvest scheduling. Records for harvest of firewood and other non-certified NTFPs, including by members of tribes. Harvest data are manually entered into WisFIRS, as is data from the Timber Sale Notice & Cutting Reports. In this respect, WisFIRS is the central repository and mechanism for monitoring the volume harvested timber and non-certified NTFPs over time.</p> <p>In 2023, the FME reported that 761,987 cord equivalents (CY22) were harvested.</p>
<p>8.2.c. The forest owner or manager periodically obtains data needed to monitor presence on the FMU of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Rare, threatened and endangered species and/or their habitats; 2) Common and rare plant communities and/or habitat; 3) Location, presence and abundance of invasive species; 4) Condition of protected areas, set-asides and buffer zones; 5) High Conservation Value Forests (see Criterion 9.4). 	<p>C</p>	<p>The DNR conducts wildlife surveys on county forests: nesting bird surveys, grouse transects, summer deer observations, winter track surveys, bear surveys, and a variety of other wildlife and plant monitoring.</p> <p>The NHI database is updated based on the results of statewide inventories, data generated by NHI cooperators at universities, nonprofit organizations, federal and state agencies and individuals; and published literature and reports submitted to the DNR.</p> <p>Foresters are trained to assess sites for invasive plants during routine forest reconnaissance. Invasives are on the</p>

		<p>recon datasheet to allow for retention of this information. Several counties participate in Cooperative Weed Management Associations. Additionally, the DNR also has a system for gathering invasives information (aquatic, wetland, and terrestrial) from the general public.</p> <p>Forest health monitoring, including gypsy moth and EAB surveys, occurs at the state level. During routine forest reconnaissance, foresters are trained to assess sites for invasives. Some counties locate incidents of invasive species detections via GPS for use when controlling and monitoring.</p> <p>As part of monitoring active harvest sites, as well as closing out such sites, county foresters ensure that protected areas, set-asides, and buffer zones are implemented according to the prescription. Notes from visits to active sites were reviewed, as were harvest close-out checklists.</p> <p>HCVs are monitored regularly, which was verified through document review and interviews with county staff.</p> <p>In 2023, the FME reported on the following: Wildlife Surveys: Nesting bird surveys, grouse transects, summer deer observations, winter track surveys, bear surveys, and a variety of other wildlife and plant monitoring. Forest Health Monitoring which includes gypsy moth and EAB surveys. DNR partners with the general public in monitoring a number of wildlife species. Reports can be found at: http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/reports.html Plants: During routine forest reconnaissance foresters also are trained to assess sites for invasives. Invasives were added to the recon data sheet a few years back to allow for retention of this information. Over 75,000 acres currently have invasive plants listed as being present on the FSC-certified County Forests. Several counties also participate in Cooperative Weed Management Associations (CWMA). DNR also has a system for gathering invasives information (aquatic, wetland, terrestrial) from the general public available on their website. http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/report.html.</p>
<p>8.2.d.1. Monitoring is conducted to ensure that site specific plans and operations are properly implemented, environmental impacts of site disturbing operations are minimized, and that harvest prescriptions and guidelines are effective.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>In addition to regular monitoring of active harvests and close-out, BMP monitoring for water quality, soil disturbance monitoring, and vernal pond monitoring occurs. Examples of timber sale inspection reports and checklists for sites visited were reviewed.</p>

		<p>A report produced in February 2016 by the Forest Stewards Guild, <i>Wisconsin Forest Practices and Harvesting Constraints Assessment</i>, evaluates the collective impact of constraints (BMPs, etc.) on forest management and ecological consequences of those constraints. The report found “that overall, guidelines, best practices, and other constraints intended to protect forest resources have positive effects on forest composition and structure and in protecting forest productivity.” This suggests that harvest prescriptions and guidelines are effective in minimizing environmental impacts of site disturbing operations associated with active forest management.</p> <p>In 2023, the FME reported that BMP monitoring for water quality, soil disturbance monitoring, and vernal pond monitoring. The County Forest committee meetings for each Forest are also a regular opportunity for the public to participate in the management of the County Forest and provide a good means of keeping tabs on social issues on the forests. DNR has a dedicated staff that conducts surveys of targeted user groups, i.e., ruffed grouse hunters during grouse management plan process and deer hunters. Also forest health monitoring done in cooperation with DNR staff (some specific activities may include Emerald Ash Borer and Oak Wilt Detection). Deer Regeneration Metric work and CFI plots. Monitoring use of recreational trails and conducting follow up maintenance.</p>
<p>8.2.d.2. A monitoring program is in place to assess the condition and environmental impacts of the forest-road system.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>WCFP requires annual reports and annual work plans for each county. These annual plans routinely include information on the system of forest roads. <i>Wisconsin’s Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality</i> includes the need for inspection at regular intervals for active roads and inspection of inactive roads. County staff interviewed indicated that their regular presence in the forest is an important mechanism for monitoring road conditions. Any problems noted by staff are promptly reported to the county administrator.</p>
<p>8.2.d.3. The landowner or manager monitors relevant socio-economic issues (see Indicator 4.4.a), including the social impacts of harvesting, participation in local economic opportunities (see Indicator 4.1.g), the creation and/or maintenance of quality job opportunities (see Indicator 4.1.b), and local purchasing opportunities (see Indicator 4.1.e).</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>With county board meetings being open to the public and most documents available for public review, the county administrators are continually aware of relevant socioeconomic issues. They often receive stakeholder comments and respond to those comments. Individual county comprehensive land use plans, as well as the WCFA website, contain monitoring information.</p>

8.2.d.4. Stakeholder responses to management activities are monitored and recorded as necessary.	C	Meeting minutes with the public and Citizen Advisory Councils serve as a record of stakeholder interaction.
8.2.d.5. Where sites of cultural significance exist, the opportunity to jointly monitor sites of cultural significance is offered to tribal representatives (see Principle 3).	C	Communication with tribal representatives is ongoing, assuring that any opportunities for joint monitoring of cultural sites are made available to tribes. No updates were reported in 2023, as confirmed via review of annual reports. Some counties, such as Sawyer, also have tribal members on the county board.
8.2.e. The forest owner or manager monitors the costs and revenues of management in order to assess productivity and efficiency.	C	<p>Quarterly and annual accomplishment reports show progress throughout the year for various work goals (timber sale establishment, reforestation, etc.). Timber sale inspections constitute monitoring at harvest sale level.</p> <p>In 2023, the FME reported that quarterly and annual accomplishment reports show progress throughout the year for various work goals (timber sale establishment, reforestation, etc.). Timber sale inspections monitor at sale level. Monitoring of recreational use areas is ongoing both for human use and maintenance needs and conducted by staff and user group partners.</p>
C8.3. Documentation shall be provided by the forest manager to enable monitoring and certifying organizations to trace each forest product from its origin, a process known as the "chain of custody."	C	
8.3.a. When forest products are being sold as FSC-certified, the forest owner or manager has a system that prevents mixing of FSC-certified and non-certified forest products prior to the point of sale, with accompanying documentation to enable the tracing of the harvested material from each harvested product from its origin to the point of sale.	C	<p>County forests use a trip ticket system for tracking FSC-certified products. Tickets have three parts: (1) when a load leaves the landing, one part is deposited in a lockbox on site.; (2) when delivered to the mill, a second ticket is maintained by the mill; and (3) and the third is returned to the county, along with mill weight or tally. See COC indicators for FMEs conformance table.</p> <p>See OBS 2023.2 in SCS COC indicators for FME, 2.5.</p>
8.3.b The forest owner or manager maintains documentation to enable the tracing of the harvested material from each harvested product from its origin to the point of sale.	C	See Indicator 8.3.a above and COC indicators for FMEs conformance table.
C8.4. The results of monitoring shall be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the management plan.	C	-
8.4.a The forest owner or manager monitors and documents the degree to which the objectives stated in the management plan are being fulfilled, as well as significant deviations from the plan.	C	Annual work plans detail current activities to be carried out, while annual reports include a review of implemented activities. AWP are based on management objectives detailed in the CLUPs and field data available in WisFIRS for classified stands. Any stands that have not been harvested

		are included as part of the next year’s annual allowable harvest or delayed until the stands are ready for harvest.
8.4.b Where monitoring indicates that management objectives and guidelines, including those necessary for conformance with this Standard, are not being met or if changing conditions indicate that a change in management strategy is necessary, the management plan, operational plans, and/or other plan implementation measures are revised to ensure the objectives and guidelines will be met. If monitoring shows that the management objectives and guidelines themselves are not sufficient to ensure conformance with this Standard, then the objectives and guidelines are modified.	C	In 2023, significant deviations from management plans or guidelines were not reported. Each county’s CLUP references monitoring and monitoring results. WCFP published the <i>Wisconsin Forest Practices and Harvesting Constraints Assessment</i> published in 2016. This publication provides an overview of how forestry practices as a whole in the state are affecting environmental and socioeconomic values. The report does not indicate that any state or county entities are failing to meet objectives; however, it does include recommendations for forest managers to consider based on a literature review and analysis of field data.
C8.5. While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring indicators, including those listed in Criterion 8.2.	C	-
8.5.a While protecting landowner confidentiality, either full monitoring results or an up-to-date summary of the most recent monitoring information is maintained, covering the Indicators listed in Criterion 8.2, and is available to the public, free or at a nominal price, upon request.	C	Annual reports and work plans present summaries of monitoring and are usually available on county web sites, or by request in offices. The public also is welcome to visit each county forest administrator’s office and request monitoring information. Additional monitoring information is available through WCFA.
<p>P9 Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.</p> <p>High Conservation Value Forests are those that possess one or more of the following attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant: concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g., endemism, endangered species, refugia); and/or large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance b) Forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems c) Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g., watershed protection, erosion control) d) Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g., subsistence, health) and/or critical to local communities’ traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities). 		
C9.1. Assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests will be completed, appropriate to scale and intensity of forest management.	C	-

<p>9.1.a The forest owner or manager identifies and maps the presence of High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF) within the FMU and, to the extent that data are available, adjacent to their FMU, in a manner consistent with the assessment process, definitions, data sources, and other guidance described in Appendix F.</p> <p>Given the relative rarity of old growth forests in the contiguous United States, these areas are normally designated as HCVF, and all old growth must be managed in conformance with Indicator 6.3.a.3 and requirements for legacy trees in Indicator 6.3.f.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>FME consults various WDNR sources, such as NHI data and plant community mapping information. FME utilizes the experience and expertise of WDNR staff on the presence of RTE species and communities (e.g., State Natural Areas). The <i>WDNR Timber Sale Handbook</i> contains codes that are used to denote community types that qualify as HCVF. County administrators maintain spreadsheets with all HCVs by the six types per county (NOTE: not all counties have HCVs). WDNR maintains a crosswalk that compares state-level terminology to HCV types.</p> <p>2023: Sawyer County has HCVs (refer to field notes). Barron County has no HCVs. Washburn County HCV are noted in the management plan.</p>
<p>9.1.b In developing the assessment, the forest owner or manager consults with qualified specialists, independent experts, and local community members who may have knowledge of areas that meet the definition of HCVs.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>The HCVF assessment is conducted in consultation with Wisconsin DNR. In that assessment, many experts, community members, and specialists are consulted during the process. Records are included in management plans, annual work plans, and county meeting minutes.</p>
<p>9.1.c A summary of the assessment results and management strategies (see Criterion 9.3) is included in the management plan summary that is made available to the public.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>This is available in the management plans (CLUP) for the counties that were visited.</p>
<p>C9.2. The consultative portion of the certification process must place emphasis on the identified conservation attributes, and options for the maintenance thereof.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>9.2.a The forest owner or manager holds consultations with stakeholders and experts to confirm that proposed HCVF locations and their attributes have been accurately identified, and that appropriate options for the maintenance of their HCV attributes have been adopted.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Wisconsin DNR and external stakeholders are consulted to determine HCVF locations and their attributes. Records are included in management plans, annual work plans, and county meeting minutes.</p>
<p>9.2.b On public forests, a transparent and accessible public review of proposed HCV attributes and HCVF areas and management is carried out. Information from stakeholder consultations and other public review is integrated into HCVF descriptions, delineations and management.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>County forest management planning documents regarding HCVF classification are open to public review through public meetings, county websites, and the Citizen Advisory Committee. Records are included in management plans, annual work plans, and county meeting minutes.</p>
<p>C9.3. The management plan shall include and implement specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the applicable conservation attributes consistent with the precautionary approach. These</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>-</p>

measures shall be specifically included in the publicly available management plan summary.		
9.3.a The management plan and relevant operational plans describe the measures necessary to ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of all high conservation values present in all identified HCVF areas, including the precautions required to avoid risks or impacts to such values (see Principle 7). These measures are implemented.	C	Each HCVF is identified in the Master Plan (CLUP) and a written description along with management objectives is provided.
9.3.b All management activities in HCVFs must maintain or enhance the high conservation values and the extent of the HCVF.	C	The counties work with Wisconsin DNR to determine and to apply the appropriate management activities that should occur in each HCVF. These include methods to protect species habitat characteristics (e.g., nest sites) or to maintain rare habitats, such as by burning, as described in the CLUP and annual work plans.
9.3.c If HCVF attributes cross ownership boundaries and where maintenance of the HCV attributes would be improved by coordinated management, then the forest owner or manager attempts to coordinate conservation efforts with adjacent landowners.	NA	No HCVs that cross ownership boundaries were observed or reported in the 2023 audit.
C9.4. Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes.	C	
9.4.a. The forest owner or manager monitors, or participates in a program to annually monitor, the status of the specific HCV attributes, including the effectiveness of the measures employed for their maintenance or enhancement. The monitoring program is designed and implemented consistent with the requirements of Principle 8.	C	<p>Periodic reconnaissance is conducted updating and targeted monitoring visits to some HCVFs each year as needed. HCV areas mostly undergo passive management. Interviews with staff indicate that these are visited periodically to ensure that there is little to no visible anthropogenic disturbance. For example, Gobbler Lake State Natural Area is annually surveyed for invasive species. HCVs within harvest units are primarily in sensitive areas that are identified during pre-harvest reconnaissance and monitored during post-harvest close-out evaluations to ensure effective protection measures.</p> <p>In 2023, the FME reported that periodic recon updating and targeted monitoring visits to some HCVFs each year as needed. In 2014 field season a contracted (UW-Superior) biological survey team completed releve plot sampling across HCVFs to establish some baseline vegetation monitoring data. In addition, “non-intensive” monitoring of HCVs like recon updates, walk throughs, cursory reviews while working in adjoining forest types, remote sensing, survey flights, drone photography, etc. HCVs that are also</p>

		State Natural Areas, local DNR NHC-Ecologist staff take the lead in monitoring these areas though County Forest staff participate as needed or as opportunities arise. Interviewed DNR ecologist in 2023 to confirm process for developing conservation measures for RTE species.
9.4.b. When monitoring results indicate increasing risk to a specific HCV attribute, the forest owner/manager re-evaluates the measures taken to maintain or enhance that attribute, and adjusts the management measures in an effort to reverse the trend.	C	According to FME staff and DNR personnel interviewed, no increasing risks to HCVs have been detected.
<p>P10 Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1-9, and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world's needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.</p> <p>This principle is not applicable to the FME.</p>		

Appendix 5 – Chain of Custody Indicators for FMEs Conformance Table

Chain of Custody indicators were not evaluated during this evaluation.

SCS FSC Chain of Custody Indicators for Forest Management Enterprises, V8-0

REQUIREMENT	C/NC/NA
1. Quality Management	
1.1 The FME shall appoint a management representative as having overall responsibility and authority for the organization’s compliance with all applicable requirements of this standard.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC
<p>Evidence 1.1: As confirmed through review of COC procedures (e.g., Chapter 90 of Timber Sale Handbook), interviews with staff, the certificate manager is Chain of Custody Administrator with responsibility and authority for the FME’s conformance with the requirements of this standard. COC information is included on the organization’s certification webpage: https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/timbersales/certification.</p>	
1.2 A system shall be implemented to track and trace all products that are sold with an FSC Claim from the <i>forest of origin</i> to the <i>forest gate(s)</i> . When legally required, and for group and multiple FMU certificates, this system shall also be documented. <i>The forest of origin should be the smallest reportable manageable unit, such as a tax parcel. It shall never be larger than a Forest Management Unit (FMU).</i> <i>The forest gate is defined as the point where the change in ownership of the certified-forest product occurs.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> NA, FME does not sell any products with an FSC claim
<p>Evidence 1.2: Confirmed via review of COC procedures and sales documentation reviewed in 2.3.</p>	
1.3 The FME shall maintain complete records of all FSC-related COC activities, including sales and training, for at least 5 years.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC
<p>Evidence 1.3: This FME’s sale records were presented and reviewed. Contracts are the main sales document and all claims are listed on the FME’s website. Contracts were reviewed for all timber sales visited. Records of FSC-related CoC activities are kept for at least 5 years, per review of records and interviews with FME staff. Log load tickets were examined, for example: Barron County ticket book template (6253-6277); Washburn County updated contract template and haul tickets (refer to photos in raw site notes).</p>	
1.4 The FME shall define its <i>forest gate(s)</i> (check all that apply):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stump <i>Stumpage sale or sales of standing timber; transfer of ownership of certified-forest product occurs <u>upon</u> harvest.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> On-site concentration yard <i>Transfer of ownership of certified-product occurs at concentration yard under control of FME.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Off-site Mill/ Log Yard/ Port <i>Transfer of ownership occurs when certified-product is unloaded or paid for at purchaser's facility or a facility under the purchaser's control.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Auction house/ Brokerage <i>Transfer of ownership occurs at a government-run or private auction house/ brokerage.</i>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lump-sum sale/ Per Unit/ Pre-Paid Agreement <i>A timber sale in which the buyer and seller agree on a total price for marked standing trees or for trees within a defined area before the wood is removed — the timber is usually paid for <u>before</u> harvesting begins. Similar to a per-unit sale.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Log landing <i>Transfer of ownership of certified-product occurs at landing/yarding areas.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please describe):	
1.5 The FME shall have sufficient control over its <i>forest gate(s)</i> to ensure that there is no risk of mixing of FSC-certified forest products covered by the scope of the FM/COC certificate with forest products from outside of the scope prior to the transfer of ownership.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> NA, FME does not sell any products with an FSC claim
Evidence 1.4/1.5: The legal transfer point is defined within each timber sale contract. For field-scaled sales, specification that logs cannot be transferred prior to scaling is included in specific language. Transfer of ownership in those cases occurs either upon scaling or approval from county forest staff.	
1.6 The FME and its contractors shall not process FSC-certified material prior to transfer of ownership at the <i>forest gate(s)</i> without conforming to applicable chain of custody requirements. <i>NOTE: This does not apply to log cutting or de-barking units, small portable sawmills, on-site processing of chips/biomass or primary processing of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) under the FME's control (e.g., latex, rattan, maple syrup, etc.) originating from the FMU under evaluation.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> NA
Evidence 1.6: No processing occurs prior to legal transfer of ownership as confirmed via field observation and review of timber sales documentation.	
1.7 The FME has supported transaction verification conducted by SCS and Assurance Services International (ASI) by providing samples of FSC transaction data as requested by SCS. <i>NOTE: Pricing information is not within the scope of transaction verification data disclosure.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA, no verification requested
1.8 The FME shall support fiber testing by surrendering samples and specimens of materials and information about species composition and the location where the sample originated for verification, as requested by its certification body, ASI or FSC.	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA, no verification requested
Evidence 1.7/1.8: This has not been requested but WI DNR would comply with such requirements as confirmed with CoC administrator.	
2. Product Control, Sales and Delivery	
2.1. Products from the certified forest area shall be identifiable as certified at the <i>forest gate(s)</i> .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> NA, FME does not sell any products with an FSC claim
Evidence 2.1: A variety of contracts were presented and reviewed for all counties sampled. These documents include the identification of these products as certified (FSC 100%) or refer the reader to the FME's website with all certificate information (including certificate codes and claims). Contracts were presented and reviewed for all sites examined during the audit; see Site Notes for a listing of those contracts reviewed.	

<p>Most harvested timber is transferred upon severance from the stump (stumpage sales) or prior to harvest (lump-sum sales). Haul tickets may be used in stumpage sales to track harvested materials once they leave the site, but ownership remains with the buyer upon ownership transfer. In lump-sum sales, the buyer is responsible for any COC requirements. For field-scaled sales, in which logs are scaled at the landing prior to transport, county and/or DNR staff scale each log and mark it with paint. This lets the buyer know that the item is approved to transport.</p>	
<p>2.2 Information about all products sold shall be compiled and documented for all FMUs in the scope of certification, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Common and scientific species name; 2) Product name or description; 3) Volume (or quantity) of product; 4) Information to trace the material to the source of origin harvest block; 5) Harvest date; 6) If basic processing activities take place in the forest, the date and volume/quantity produced; and 7) Whether or not the material was sold with an FSC Claim. 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC</p>
<p>Evidence 2.2: County staff tally and track harvest timber volumes. Information is entered into WisFIRS for comparison of pre-harvest and post-harvest volume information. Scale tickets are retained for each load.</p>	
<p>2.3. The FME shall ensure that all sales documents issued for outputs sold with FSC claims include the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) name and contact details of the FME; b) information to identify the customer, such as their name and address; c) date when the document was issued; d) product name or description, including common and scientific species name(s); e) quantity of products sold; f) the FME’s FSC Forest Management (FM/COC) or FSC Controlled Wood (CW/FM) code; g) clear indication of the FSC claim for each product item or the total products as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the claim “FSC 100%” for products from FSC 100% product groups; or ii. the claim “FSC Controlled Wood” for products from FSC Controlled Wood product groups. 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> NA, FME does not sell any products with an FSC claim</p>
<p>2.4 If the sales documentation issued by the FME is not included with the shipment of the product and this information is relevant for the customer to identify the product as being FSC certified, the related delivery documentation has included the same information as required in indicator 2.3 and a reference linking it to the sales documentation.</p> <p>Note: 2.3 and 2.4 are based on FSC-STD-40-004 V3-0 Clauses 5.1 and 5.3</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> NA, delivery documentation not required or FME is not responsible for issuing delivery documentation <input type="checkbox"/> NA, FME does not sell any products with an FSC claim</p>
<p>Evidence 2.3/2.4: A variety of timber sale contracts, trip tickets, wood settlement sheets and a timber harvest summary spreadsheet (2017 and 2018) were presented and reviewed and include the volume of products sold. A variety of timber sale contracts were presented and reviewed for each site described in section 2.1 (see Site Notes). Current county forest timber sale contracts and haul tickets are maintained by county forest administrators. Whenever changes are made relative to forest certification information, the WCFP manager is consulted. Contracts contain the correct certificate code and FSC claim, as well as elements a)-e). Samples of timber sale contracts and load tickets were examined. Load tickets examined have elements a)-g) of 2.3 as stated above.</p>	

<p>2.5 If the FME is unable to include the FSC claim and/or certificate code in sales or delivery documents, the required information has been provided to the customer through supplementary documentation (e.g. supplementary letters). In this case, the FME has obtained permission from SCS to implement supplementary documentation in accordance with the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. there shall exist clear information linking the supplementary documentation to the sales or delivery documents; b. there is no risk that the customer will misinterpret which products are or are not FSC certified in the supplementary documentation; and c. where the sales documents contain multiple products with different FSC claims, each product shall be cross-referenced to the associated FSC claim provided in the supplementary documentation. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> NA, all information included per 2.3 and/or 2.4
<p>Evidence 2.5: In 2023, the FME decided to include its certificate information on its webpage and include reference to that either in contracts or load tickets. Some counties have updated their templates to be consistent with this new method for communicating claims. For example, Washburn County’s contract includes the following text: <i>10. The area encompassed by this timber sale and forest products from this sale including logs or chips of all species are 3rd party certified. Seller’s forest certification information and chain of custody can be found at: https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/timbersales/certification.</i></p> <p>While other counties include the correct FSC information on their contracts and/or load tickets, their contract templates have not been updated to reflect this change in sales method. Contracts reviewed are cited in load tickets. Therefore, it is possible to link the supplementary documentation on the webpage to the contract and load tickets should the new method be implemented across all FSC-certified counties. See OBS 2023.2.</p>	
<p>2.6 The FME may identify products exclusively made of input materials from small or community producers by adding the following claim to sales documents: “From small or community forest producers.” This claim can be passed on along the supply chain by certificate holders. <i>A forest management unit (FMU) or group of FMUs that meet(s) the small and low-intensity managed forest eligibility criteria (FSC-STD-1-003a) and addenda. A community FMU must comply with the tenure and management criteria defined in FSC-STD-40-004.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA, not a small or community producer; or does not wish to pass along this claim
<p>Evidence 2.6: FME does not make such claims.</p>	
<p>3. Labeling and Promotion</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> NA – FME does not use/ intend to use trademarks and no trademark uses were detected during the audit.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> NA – CW/FM certificates are not allowed to use FSC trademarks and no trademark uses were detected during the audit (Note: it is a Major nonconformity to 3.1 if CW/FM certificates are found to be using trademarks).</p>	
<p>3.1 The FME shall adhere to relevant trademark use requirements of FSC-STD-50-001 described in the <i>SCS Trademark Annex for FMEs</i>.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC
<p>Evidence 3.1: Refer to evidence and findings cited in applicable trademark checklist(s) cited below. <input type="checkbox"/> FSC trademark use was detected for a CW/FM certificate as described in Major CAR for 3.1, FSC-STD-30-010, Annex 3, 1.2, and FSC-STD-50-001, 2.1e and 11.2: See Trademark Checklist in this Audit report.</p>	
<p>4. Outsourcing</p>	
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA – FME does not outsource any COC-related activities, as confirmed via interviews, sales documentation, and field observation.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> NA – FME outsources low-risk activities such as transport and harvesting, as confirmed via interviews, sales documentation, and field observation.</p>	

4.1 The FME shall provide the names and contact details of all outsourced service providers.	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
4.2 The FME shall have a control system for the outsourced process and agreement which ensures that: a) The material used for the production of FSC-certified material is traceable and not mixed with any other material prior to the point of transfer of legal ownership; b) The outsourcer keeps records of FSC-certified material covered under the outsourcing agreement; c) The FME issues the final invoice for the processed or produced FSC-certified material following outsourcing; d) The outsourcer only uses FSC trademarks on products covered by the scope of the outsourcing agreement and not for promotional use; e) The outsourcer does not further outsource the material; and f) The outsourcer accepts the right of the certificate body to audit them.	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
Evidence 4.1/4.2: Logging and transportation of forest products are considered low risk and therefore these indicators are NA.	
5. Training and/or Communication Strategies/	
5.1 All relevant FME staff and outsourcers shall be trained in the FME’s COC control system commensurate with the scale and intensity of operations and shall demonstrate competence in implementing the FME’s COC control system.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC
5.2 The FME shall maintain up-to-date records of its COC training and/or communications program, such as a list of trained employees, completed COC trainings or communications, the intended frequency of COC training (e.g., training plan), and related program materials (e.g., presentations, memos, contracts, employee handbooks, etc.).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC
Evidence 5.1/5.2: Interviewed County staff demonstrated awareness of when to use haul tickets and how to assign them to each sale. There is low risk for failure to pass COC claims on to buyers since information from 2.3 is included in contract templates. Informal training occurs at WCFA meetings to review certification issues, including COC. Operators showed proper understanding of how to use the trip ticket system and the purpose of the COC procedures. Training on COC procedures occurs for new employees that learn timber sale administration. Since the current COC system is largely automated as information is included in contracts and load tickets by default, training records of training are minimal.	

Appendix 6 – Trademark Standard Conformance Table

- N/A, does not use/intend to use FSC trademarks for any purposes (finished with this section); or
- N/A, is fully integrated and all trademark uses are treated under the COC Annex to this report that includes a full review of FSC-STD-40-004 and FSC-STD-50-001.

1. General Requirements for Use of the FSC Trademarks (FSC “checkmark-and-tree” logo, initials “FSC,” and/or name “Forest Stewardship Council”)		
Trademark uses reviewed:		
Trademark Application (on-product/promotional)	Case Approval #, or Email (include approver name & date), or other appropriate documentation	Are all elements correct? (e.g., trademark symbol, color scheme, size, etc.) If not, describe in Nonconformities below.

<p>Website</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/timbersales/countyforests ▪ https://forestcountywi.com/forestry 	<p>Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> All known uses reviewed.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample reviewed. Rationale that sample choice is sufficient to confirm requirements are met: Website was searched for “FSC” and “Forest Stewardship Council” terms, and the Certificate “landing page” was examined for each county.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Trademark uses detected include those grandfathered in under prior FSC trademark rules (e.g., FSC-TMK-50-201). Place the initials “GF” by the specific Trademark Applications above. <i>Note: This only applies to printed items or physical promotional materials (e.g., hats, load tickets) in stock. New printings, items, and websites must be updated per FSC-STD-50-001 requirements. If the organization only has GF uses and no new uses, the rest of this checklist is NA.</i></p>		
<p>1.2 Trademark License Agreement and valid certificate In order to use these FSC trademarks, the FME shall have a valid FSC trademark license agreement and hold a valid certificate. <i>Note: Consultations for certification Organizations applying for forest management certification or conducting activities related to the implementation of controlled wood requirements, may refer to FSC by name and initials for stakeholder consultation.</i></p>		<p>Maintained on file by SCS Main Office</p>
<p>Evidence 1.2: Maintained on file by SCS Main Office.</p>		
<p>1.6 Product Group List The products intended to be labeled or promoted as FSC certified have been included in the organization’s certified product group list.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS</p>	
<p>Evidence 1.6: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refer to Product Groups List in Public Summary Report; <input type="checkbox"/> The following nonconformance(s) were detected in Product Groups: ; or <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to OBS related to Product Groups:</p>		
<p>1.3 Trademark License Code The FSC trademark license code assigned by FSC to the organization accompanies any use of the FSC trademarks. It is sufficient to show the code once per product or promotional material.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS</p>	
<p>1.4 Trademark Symbol The FSC logo and the ‘Forests For All Forever’ marks shall include the trademark symbol ® in the upper right corner when used on products or materials to be distributed in a country where the relevant trademark is registered. For use in a country where the trademark is not yet registered, use of the symbol ™ is recommended. The Trademark Registration List document is available in the FSC trade-mark portal and marketing toolkit. The symbol ® shall also be added to ‘FSC’ and ‘Forest Steward-ship Council’ at the first or most prominent use in any text; one use per material is sufficient (e.g. website or brochure). <i>NOTE: The use of the trademark symbol is not required for FSC claims in sales and delivery documents, or for the disclaimer statement specified in requirement 6.2.</i></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS <input type="checkbox"/> NA, one or more of noted exceptions applies</p>	
<p>2.1 Restrictions on using FSC trademarks The organization has not used the FSC trademarks in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) in a way that could cause confusion, misinterpretation, or loss of credibility to the FSC certification scheme; b) in a way that implies that FSC endorses, participates in, or is responsible for activities performed by the organization, outside the scope of certification; c) to promote product quality aspects not covered by FSC certification; d) in product brand or company names, such as ‘FSC Golden Timber’ or website domain names; e) in connection with FSC controlled wood or controlled material – they shall not be used for labelling products or in any promotion of sales or sourcing of controlled material or FSC controlled wood; the 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS</p>	

initials FSC shall only be used to pass on FSC controlled wood claims in sales and de-livery documentation, in conformity with FSC chain of custody requirements.	
2.2 Translations The name ‘Forest Stewardship Council’ has not been replaced with a translation. A translation may be included in brackets after the name, for example: Forest Stewardship Council® (translation)	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA, no translations
Evidence 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, and 2.2: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refer to Trademark uses reviewed above; <input type="checkbox"/> The following nonconformance(s) were detected, <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to OBS:	
Sections 8 and 9 Graphic Rules The organization has only used FSC logos that conform to the standard requirements governing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • color and font (8.1-8.3); • format and size (8.4-8.9); • label placement (8.10); and • ‘Forests For All Forever’ marks (9.1-9.7). 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS
1.5 Trademark Use Approval The organization has submitted all intended uses of the FSC trademarks to SCS for approval. OR The organization has an approved trademark use management system in place. (If the organization has a trademark use management system, complete Annex A.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS
4.6 FSC trademarks may be used to identify FSC-certified materials in the chain of custody before the products are finished. It is not necessary to submit such segregation marks for approval. All segregation marks shall be removed before the products go to the final point of sale or are delivered to uncertified organizations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS <input type="checkbox"/> NA, trademarks no used for segregation marks
Evidence Graphic Rules, 1.5, and 4.6: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refer to Trademark uses reviewed above; <input type="checkbox"/> The following nonconformance(s) were detected ; or <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to OBS:	

2. On-Product Use of FSC Trademarks
 NA, no use of on-product trademarks (*on-product checklist may be deleted*)

3. Promotional Use of FSC Trademarks
 NA, no use of promotional trademarks (*promotional checklist may be deleted*)

6.1 Catalogues, Brochures, and Websites When the FSC trademarks have been used in catalogues, brochures, or websites, the following requirements apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is sufficient to present the promotional elements only once in catalogues, brochures, websites, etc. • If both FSC-certified and uncertified products are listed then a text such as “Look for our FSC®-certified products” shall be used next to the promotional elements and the FSC-certified products shall be clearly identified. • If some or all of the products are available as FSC certified on request only, this is be clearly stated. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS <input type="checkbox"/> NA, not using trademarks in catalogues/ brochures/websites/
6.2 Sales and Delivery Documents	<input type="checkbox"/> C

<p>When the FSC trademarks are included on sales or delivery document templates that may be used for both FSC and non-FSC products, the following or a similar statement is included: “Only the products that are identified as such on this document are FSC certified”.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Use of the FSC claim and certificate code on the invoices does not qualify as FSC trademark use.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA, not using trademarks on templates for FSC & non-FSC products
<p>6.3 Promotional Items All promotional items (e.g., mugs, pens, T-shirts, caps, banners, vehicles, etc.) have displayed, at minimum, the FSC logo and FSC trademark license code.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA, not labeling promotional items
<p>6.5 Trade Fairs When the FSC trademarks are used for promotion at trade fairs, the organization has: a) clearly marked which products are FSC certified, or b) add a visible disclaimer stating “Ask for our FSC®-certified products” or similar if no FSC-certified products are displayed. <i>NOTE: Use of text to describe the FSC certification of the organization does not require a disclaimer.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA, not using trademarks at trade fairs
<p>Section 6.6 and 6.7 Investment/Financial Claims 6.6 When investment companies or others are making financial claims based on the organization’s FSC certified operations, the organization has taken full responsibility for the use of the FSC trademarks. 6.7 Any such claims have been accompanied by the disclaimer, “FSC is not responsible for and does not endorse any financial claims on returns on investments.”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA, not making financial claims about FSC status
<p>7.1 and 7.2 Other Forestry Certification Scheme Logos The FSC trademarks have not been used together with the marks of other forest certification schemes in a way which implies equivalence, or in a way which is disadvantageous to the FSC trademarks in terms of size or placement.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS <input type="checkbox"/> NA, not using other scheme logos
<p>7.3 Business Cards The FSC trademarks have not used on business cards to promote the organization’s certification. The FSC logo or ‘Forests For All Forever’ marks are not used on business cards for promotion. A text reference to the organization’s FSC certification, with license code, is allowed, for example “We are FSC® certified (FSC® C#####)” or “We sell FSC®-certified products (FSC® C#####)”.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS <input type="checkbox"/> NA, approval granted prior to July 1, 2011
<p>7.4 Promotion with CB Logo FSC certified products have not been promoted using only the SCS Kingfisher and/or SCS Global Services logo.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> C w/ OBS
<p>Evidence 6.1-6.3, 6.5-6.7, 7.1-7.4: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refer to Trademark uses reviewed above; <input type="checkbox"/> The following nonconformance(s) were detected ; or <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to OBS:</p>	

Annex A: Trademark use management system
 NA, not using a trademark management system (*Annex A checklist may be deleted*)
Annex B, Additional trademark rules for group FM certificate holders

NA, not a group FM certificate or group does not use FSC trademarks (*Annex B checklist may be deleted*)

Appendix 7 – Group Management Program

This is not a group certificate, so this appendix is not applicable.

Appendix 8 – Additional Checklists

Include here additional checklists which may be applicable to this evaluation for example, Intact Forest Landscapes, and ESRA checklists.

No additional checklists, so this appendix is not applicable