

Forest DATE Certification



Fort St. John Pilot Project

As part of the commitment to sustainable forest management and forest certification made by the Fort St. John Pilot Project (FSJPP) participants, an audit team from KPMG Performance Registrar Inc. completed the following assessments of the FSJPP in August 2004:

- A periodic assessment of the FSJPP Area to the Canadian Standards Association's standard for Sustainable Forest Management (CSA-SFM); and
- Field assessments of Canfor's operations in the Fort St. John TSA as part of a corporate-wide periodic assessment to the ISO 14001 standard for Environmental Management Systems (EMS).

The audit found that the Sustainable Forest Management System in use on the FSJPP continues to meet the CSA-SFM standard. In addition, Canfor's EMS continues to be effectively implemented.

CSA-SFM registration demonstrates a strong commitment to sustainable forest management, and is a significant achievement for the FSJPP participants. The combined assessment on the FSJPP Area applies to a defined forest area (DFA) of 4,152,048 hectares with an allowable annual harvest of 2,115,000 m³.

Background

- The FSJPP was implemented across the FSJ Timber Supply Area in 2001 as a pilot project for an improved regulatory framework for forest practices. The main components of the project include regulatory flexibility to facilitate adaptive approaches to forest management, landscape level planning through an SFM Plan, ongoing public involvement through a Public Advisory Group (PAG) and the adoption and implementation of certification systems as surrogates for the existing administrative process.
- The FSJPP participants include BC Timber Sales, Cameron River Logging Ltd., Canadian Forest Products Ltd., Slocan Forest Products Ltd., Louisiana-Pacific Canada Ltd. and Tembec Inc. All of the participants have consented in writing to take part in the pilot project, and be subject to the terms and conditions of the FSJPP Regulation.
- The CSA-SFM and ISO 14001 standards require regular audits by the registrar to assess ongoing conformance with the standards and the implementation of action plans related to previous assessments.
- A team of two auditors conducted the CSA-SFM and ISO 14001 periodic assessments in August 2004.
- The team conducted interviews with Participants' staff, contractors and stakeholders and examined EMS and CSA records, monitoring information and public involvement records.
- The team conducted a field assessment of conformance, visiting 31 field sites to assess operational planning, harvesting, silviculture and road construction, maintenance and deactivation.



Findings - Fort St. John Pilot Project

Noteworthy comments

- Our assessment indicated that the SFM system continues to be effectively implemented in the pilot project area.
- The assessment verified that an effective aspen regeneration strategy has been implemented on BC Timber Sales' blocks, with careful attention paid to minimizing the area of productive site occupied by debris piles.
- A high degree of coordination was noted among participants in the planning and implementation of their forest operations across the pilot project area. This facilitated operational efficiencies and the ability to effectively manage potential cumulative impacts associated with SFM plan strategies.
- Opportunities are being created for improved wood utilization and greater flexibility in cutblock layout as a result of the development of an OSB plant.
- The site preparation treatments for sites assessed in the field were found to be suitably prescribed and implemented and were well tailored to the regeneration requirements of each site.
- The field audit noted effective implementation of patch size distribution targets specified in the SFM plan (e.g., large cut and leave patches developed in the Blueberry Landscape Unit (LU) are consistent with the natural pattern of forested landscapes in the Boreal Plains Natural Disturbance Unit and will facilitate movement towards patch size distribution targets specified for the LU in the SFM plan).
- The SFM plan has been updated to provide a new, more appropriate methodology for assessing carbon sequestration in the FSJPP. This allows for the comparison of planned sequestration levels resulting from forest management to predicted sequestration levels in the absence of intervention.

Key Areas of Nonconformance

- Field inspection of deactivated roads on BC Timber Sales blocks identified instances of inadequate water management practices that were not picked up on final inspections, including:
 - Inadequate or damaged cross-drains resulting in water flowing down and scouring the roadway and, in some cases, carrying sediment directly into streams (3 blocks);
 - Failure to install required drainage structures (e.g., culverts) to manage water, resulting in alteration and obstruction of natural drainage patterns, erosion of the road surface, sediment transport into NCDs and streams on the low side of the road and connecting two previously independent NCDs (1 block); and
 - Lack of grass seeding of road surface (2 blocks).
- Isolated inconsistencies, inaccuracies or omissions were identified in site level plans as follows:
 - On one site (Canfor) the site level plan did not identify the practices required for an S2 stream adjacent to the block. Consequently, a minor amount of cutting occurred in the riparian reserve zone of the stream.
 - On one site (BC Timber Sales) the site level plan contains contradictory statements as to the required practices within the riparian management area of an S3 stream.

CSA-SFM and ISO 14001 Periodic Assessments

Major nonconformances	0
Minor nonconformances	3
Opportunities for improvement	2

Major nonconformances:

- Are pervasive or critical to the achievement of the EMS/SFM Objectives.

Minor nonconformances:

- Are isolated incidents that are non-critical to the achievement of EMS/SFM Objectives.

All nonconformances require an action plan within 30 days and must be addressed by the operation.

Major nonconformances must be addressed immediately or registration can not be achieved/maintained.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Are not nonconformances but are comments on specific areas where improvements can be made.

Findings - Fort St. John Pilot Project

- The site level plan for one block (BC Timber Sales) omitted to identify, classify and prescribe management practices around a number of streams and NCDs on the block.
- The site level plan for one block (BC Timber Sales) a) allowed for permanent access disturbance significantly greater than necessary (although appropriate practices occurred on the ground) and b) included a Standard Unit comprised of deciduous species for which the documented regeneration strategy did not consider the deciduous as acceptable regeneration despite the logging timing and practices being geared toward promotion of deciduous suckering.
- While an internal audit was conducted in June 2004, the audit report had not been provided to the operation in a timely manner (and was not available by August 2004).

Key Opportunities for Improvement

- Although BC Timber Sales staff indicated that SFM awareness training had occurred, no record of this training was generated.
- Field inspection of drainage controls on existing and recently constructed road networks indicated generally good management of water, with the following isolated exceptions:
 - A 500mm culvert draining an NCD into an S6 stream on one road (Canfor) was crushed at the intake and was plugged with a considerable volume of sediment at both the intake and outlet ends.
 - A culvert underlying a Forest Service Road (BC Timber Sales) had been crushed and punctured on the road bed and twisted at the outlet end resulting in the diversion of water onto the road surface.



Patch size distribution targets specified in the SFM plan were effectively implemented across specific forested landscapes to promote consistency with and movement towards natural disturbance patterns.

Through KPMG QRI, KPMGs Vancouver based forestry specialist group registers forest companies to ISO 14001, CSA-SFM and AF&PA SFI certification standards. The group is lead by Mike Alexander and consists of a highly qualified team of professional foresters and industry experts.

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