

# Forest Certification UPDATE



## SINCLAR GROUP FOREST PRODUCTS LTD.

### Overview of Sinclair Group Forest Products Ltd. SFM Area

Sinclar is a large producer of structural lumber as well as pellets. Logs are obtained both from the forest licences managed by the company and from a significant wood procurement program.

The forest licences are volume based tenures on Crown lands. Operations are conducted within the Sub Boreal Spruce and the Engelmann Spruce/Subalpine Fir Biogeoclimatic Zones. The main tree species grown and harvested are lodgepole pine, interior spruce, and subalpine fir with a minor component of Douglas-fir.



Management of the woodlands provides a continuous timber supply while maintaining the forest for range, recreation, trapping, aboriginal values, fish, and wildlife uses.

### BACKGROUND

During the period of September 29 . October 3, 2014, the Sinclair Group underwent a 24 month surveillance audit to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI®) Standard 2010-2014. The registration cycle is over 3 years with surveillance audits conducted annually. This report summarizes the audit process and results of the SAI Global re-registration audit.

### SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION

Forest management activities - planning, harvesting, transportation and silviculture on forest licenses A18171, A18156, A18163, A17842, A64418, A81516, A82364, A16821, A57545, A61216, A89464, A30526, A91154 and A55578 - and procurement of fiber from central BC. Objectives 1-10 and 14-20.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SFI Program third-party surveillance was undertaken by SAI Global. SAI Global is an independent third party registrar that is accredited by the ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) for registrations to SFIS 2010-2014. This ensures the integrity and credibility of the audit process.

The audit assessed active and completed harvest operations through interviews with Sinclair Group staff and contractors. The audit also assessed the SFIS and supporting EMS documentation, records at the Sinclair Group offices. The audit used site visits and interviews with landowners to assess the Sinclair Group procurement system.

The Sinclair Group is a multi-site SFIS, consisting of 4 sites plus the Head Office. For this surveillance audit the L&M Lumber Ltd. operations in Vanderhoof and Apollo Forest Products in Fort St James were audited, as well as the head office functions in Prince George. All sites are located in British Columbia.

### THE AUDITORS

The SAI Global audit team who performed the audit consisted of William Sloan, RFT, EMS(LA), SFM(LA) and Dave Barker, RPF, SFM(LA). The auditors are Forest Professionals.

### KEY AREAS OF NON-CONFORMANCE

No areas of major non-conformance were identified during the audit; however 2 minor non-conformances were noted:

- 10.1. 3. Contracts for the purchase of raw material include provisions requiring the use of best management practices: The contracts for the purchase of raw material at the L&M, Apollo and Lakeland sites do not include provisions requiring the use of best management practices;
- 10.2. Program Participants shall monitor the use of best management practices: The Sinclair Group fiber sourcing program is inconsistently implemented.

SAI has reviewed the corrective action plans provided by Sinclair to deal with the identified minor non-conformances and have found them to be acceptable. Effectiveness will be assessed at the next audit.

### KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The following 2 opportunities for improvement were identified during the audit:

- 9.1.1: Sinclair may wish to consider reviewing the information provided to suppliers to verify it is up-to-date.
- Section 9, Appendix 1 Multi Site Requirements: Sinclair may wish to consider developing a system to verify that all elements of the Standard have been audited over the course of the certificate cycle.

### SFIS 2010-2014

#### Periodic Assessments

Major non-conformances: 0  
Minor non-conformances: 2  
Opportunities  
for Improvement: 2  
Positive Aspects: 3

#### Major Non-Conformances

Pervasive or critical to the achievement of the SFI objectives.

All major non-conformances require an action plan to be implemented by the auditee within 90 days of an initial audit and subsequently 60 days or registration cannot be achieved/maintained

#### Minor Non-Conformances

Isolated incidents that are non-critical but must be addressed before the next surveillance audit to maintain compliance to the SFI standard.

#### Opportunity for Improvement

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

#### Positive Aspects

Areas that are deemed to be of best practices



## **POSITIVE ASPECTS**

The audit identified the following positive aspects of the Sinclair Group SFIS:

- Use of steel bridge at a newly built road over an historic wagon road to minimize disturbance to the trail.
- Planning checklist, once completed for a CP/SP submission is passed on to operations for their use in ensuring that all the measures planned for a block or a road are actually carried out.
- Undertaking two Management Reviews per year.

## **EVIDENCE OF CONFORMITY**

Evidence that was assessed to determine Sinclair Group conformity with the SFIS 2010-2014 standard appears below:

### **SFI-01 Forest Management Planning**

Forest Stewardship Plans, Timber Supply Review, Environmental Management System, Cut Control Summary, Ministry of Forests Cut Control Statements; Interviews.

### **SFI-02 Forest Productivity**

Forest Stewardship Plans, Site Plans, Standard Operating Procedures, Logging Plan maps, silviculture reports including planting, regeneration delay, free growing and brushing, reforestation and free growing compliance records; Chief Foresters Standards for Seed Use, planting program data and prescriptions, silviculture survey records, pre-work and inspection records, Fire Preparedness Plans, Training records, Interviews.

### **SFI-03 Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources**

Forest Stewardship Plans, Standard Operating Procedures, GIS, Site Plans, LPs, Harvest and road pre-work and inspection records, Internal audit records, Training records, Logging agreements, Interviews and Field inspections operations.

### **SFI-04 Conservation of Biological Diversity**

Forest Stewardship Plans, Ungulate Winter Range and Wildlife Habitat Area Orders; Species at Risk Observation Form; species and ecological communities at risk lists; GIS, Site Plans, LPs, Operational pre-works and inspection records; Training records, Logging agreements. Interviews and Field inspections of operations.

### **SFI-05 Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits**

Forest Stewardship Plans, Site Plans, LPs, Legal Orders, Visual Quality Objectives, Visual Impact Assessments, GIS map layers, Reports generated from the Company's database specific to cut block size, Free to Grow Surveys, silvicultural treatments, referrals and stakeholder communications, Interviews and Field inspections of operations.

### **SFI-06 Protection of Special Sites**

Forest Stewardship Plans, Higher level plans, PMP First Nation referral review and communication records, Silviculture Plans; LPs; Archeological Impact Assessments, Pre-work and inspection records, Interviews and Field inspections operations.

**SFI-07 Efficient Use of Forest Resources**

Forest Stewardship Plans, Silviculture Plans, Logging agreements, Contractor training records; Pre-work and inspection records, Field inspections of blocks; Interviews and Field inspections of operations.

**SFI-08 Landowner Outreach**

Western Canada Sustainable Forestry Initiative Implementation Committee, Wood Producer Information Package, SIC brochure, site visits.

**SFI-09 Use of Qualified Resource and Logging Professionals**

Western Canada Sustainable Forestry Initiative Implementation Committee, SIC brochure. Interviews.

**SFI-10 Adherence to Best Management Practices**

Western Canada Sustainable Forestry Initiative Implementation Committee, Wood Producer Information Package, SIC brochure, Interviews.

**SFI-11 Promote Conservation of Biological Diversity, Biodiversity Hotspots and Major Tropical Wilderness Areas**

The Sinclair Group does not source fiber from outside North America.

**SFI-12 Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Illegal Logging**

The Sinclair Group does not source fiber from outside North America.

**SFI-13 Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Sources without Effective Social Laws**

The Sinclair Group does not source fiber from outside North America.

**SFI-14 Legal and Regulatory Compliance**

EMS, Laws, Legislation, regulations, Management review meeting minutes, Inspection records, Internal audit records, Compliance tracking records, Government compliance and enforcement records, Corrective Action plans, Environmental and SFM Policy, Health and Safety Policy.

**SFI-15 Forestry Research & Technology**

Sample of research reports, Regen survey records, Government submission records, Inspection records, Interviews.

**SFI-16 Training and Education**

EMS Manual and training matrix, Sustainable Forest Management & Environmental Policies, Health and Safety Policy, Training records, staff and contractor training, Wood Producer Information Package, meeting minutes, Interviews and Field inspections operations.

**SFI-17 Community Involvement in the Practice of Sustainable Forestry**

SIC meeting minutes, public resources (including posted WCSIC Wood Monitoring Form and reporting of inconsistent practices); SIC Wood Producer Information Package, SIC SFI Brochure, SFI Evidence Package, Forest Stewardship Plans and associated referral

information, Site Plans, pre-works, Education/community involvement records, Records of public inquiries, Interviews, including the mayors of Vanderhoof and Fort St. James.

### **SFI-18 Public Land Management Responsibilities**

Forest Stewardship Plans, Site Plans; Records respecting the Company's involvement in public land planning and management activities; First Nations and stakeholder and external correspondence files/records; Communication strategy files/records; AIAs, AOA's; Cutting Permit development and block files.

### **SFI-19 Communications and Public Reporting**

Communication strategy files/records, meeting minutes, SFI website, Interviews.

### **SFI-20 Management Review and Continual Improvement**

Management review meeting minutes and associated input/output records, Forestry meeting agenda and minutes; Internal audit records, Field inspection records, Corrective Action Plans, Field Inspections, Interviews.



*Field review of the L&M procurement program included the landowner and the L&M Woods Manager. The site was walked and the management objectives discussed with the landowner.*

SAI Global forestry specialist group registers/certifies forest companies to ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001, CSA Z809 and CSA Z804 SFM, CERTFOR FM, CERTFOR CoC, SFIS, SFI CoC, PEFC CoC. QMI-SAI Global registers/certifies forest companies to FSC FM and CoC The group, led by Sylvain Frappier, Technical Manager - Forestry, consists of a highly qualified team of professional foresters, technical and industry experts. Contact [certification.americas@saiglobal.com](mailto:certification.americas@saiglobal.com) for more information.

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