

Forest Certification UPDATE



STUWIX RESOURCES JOINT VENTURE

DESCRIPTION OF COMPANY

Stuwix Resources Joint Venture was established in 2004 and is owned and operated by eight First Nations bands in the Southern Interior of British Columbia. Stuwix Resources vision is to promote healthy ecosystems and healthy independent communities, while integrating First Nations' traditional use and practices into forest management. Stuwix is responsible for the overall management of several licences, including planning, developing, marketing, timber-harvesting, road-building and silviculture. A management committee, made up of representatives from the eight bands, operates the joint-venture.

The certified area covers 79,000 ha of Crown land, with an annual cut of 240,000 m³. The primary species harvested is lodgepole pine; largely salvaged from mountain pine beetle infected stands. The logs are sold to local area mills for use in producing lumber, chips, and co-products. The top diameter log is salvaged and used for post and rails and pulp, and the remaining waste is ground for biofuels. Stuwix has taken a leadership role in capacity building for local First Nations' communities, ensuring First Nations employment in their company, and providing a ripple of economic benefits to local businesses.

BACKGROUND

During the period of September 24 to 25, 2015 Stuwix Resources Joint Venture underwent a 24 month surveillance audit to the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard. The registration cycle is over 3 years with surveillance audits conducted annually. This report summarizes the audit process and the results of the SAI Global evaluation.

SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION

Forest management activities — planning, harvesting, transportation, and silviculture on FL A65006, NRFL A85191, NRFL A86085, NRFL A84349, NRFL A82441, NRFL A84350 and NRFL A85451.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) program third-party audit 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 SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard and SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard. This ensures the integrity and credibility of the audit process.

The audit assessed active and completed harvest operations in the Princeton area through interviews with the company staff and contractors. The audit also assessed the SFI documentation and records at the company's office.

THE AUDITORS

The SAI Global audit team who performed the audit consisted of Cindy Hutchison, RPF, audit team leader. The auditor is a Professional Foresters and certified lead auditor.



AREAS OF NON-CONFORMANCE

There were no non-conformances identified during the audit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Consider

- updating the SFM Policy to integrate the mission statement and strengthen the principle 11 and indicator 8.1.1.
- updating the EMS manual to refer to the 2015-2019 SFI Standard.
- that following the 2014-10 “Inconsistent Practices Process – SFI Implementation Committees Interpretation” document for WC SIC participants could lead to a non-conformance as the standard requires the certification body be notified of the complaint within 45 days, to have the opportunity to review at the next audit, regardless if the issue is considered to be resolved by the program participant.
- reviewing SFI training elements in pre-work meetings specifically referring and reviewing sections of the field manual (to refresh training and ensure all contractors have the manual).

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLANS

Not applicable.

COMPLAINTS

No complaints have been received; therefore the complaint handling process could not be verified.

POSITIVE ASPECTS

- Continual improvement in utilization is exceptional.
- Leaving of stub trees and critter piles along streams and NCDs.
- Outstanding quantity of road rehabilitation.
- Excellent safety checks and assistance to stranded drivers.

SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard Periodic Assessments

Major non-conformances:	0
Minor non-conformances:	0
Opportunities for Improvement:	4
Positive Aspects:	4

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.

EVIDENCE OF CONFORMITY TO THE SFI 2015-2019 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

Objectives Audited

Objective 1	Forest Management Planning	✓
Objective 2	Forest Health and Productivity	
Objective 3	Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources (3.1.3 only)	✓
Objective 4	Conservation of Biological Diversity	✓
Objective 5	Management of Visual and Recreational Benefits (5.1 and 5.2 only)	✓
Objective 6	Protection of Special Sites	
Objective 7	Efficient Use of Forest Resources	
Objective 8	Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights	✓
Objective 9	Legal and Regulatory Compliance	✓
Objective 10	Forestry Research, Science and Technology	
Objective 11	Training and Education	
Objective 12	Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach	✓
Objective 13	Public Land Management Responsibilities	
Objective 14	Communications and Public Reporting	✓
Objective 15	Management Review and Continual Improvement	✓

Evidence Observed

Environmental management system (EMS) Manual	✓	Cutblock size calculations	✓
Written policies	✓	Employee observation forms (species at risk, invasive plants, other values)	✓
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for best management practices	✓	Pre-work discussions/meeting records	✓
EMS and SFI field handbook	✓	Monitoring records for non-timber values	
Training records (staff and contractors)		Utilization records	
SFI/EMS training agenda		Laws, legislation, regulations records	✓
Health and safety manual and/or employee policy manual	✓	Annual management review records	✓
Timber supply review		Internal audit records	
Maps (pre-harvest, harvest, post-harvest, and silviculture)	✓	Corrective action logs	✓
Timber development standards		Education/community involvement records	
Non-timber values impact assessments (riparian, visual, recreation, biodiversity, cultural heritage, other:)		Records of public inquiries and complaints	
GIS inventories (soils, forest, land classification, non-timber values)		Stakeholder communications records	
Long term management plans and sustainable harvest level calculation	✓	Agreements and communications with Indigenous communities	✓
Cutting/harvesting permits		Multi-licensee and/or government meeting minutes	
Operational plans (annual, cutblock level)	✓	Logging agreements and/or contracts	
Wet/adverse weather plans or guidelines		Wood producer training programs	
Reforestation plans		Wood producer information package	
Pest management plan		SFI Annual Reports	✓
Fire preparedness plan		SFI and company websites	✓
Spill prevention and response plan	✓	SFI brochure	
Silviculture surveys and reports		SFI Implementation committee (participation/support)	✓
Standards for seed use		Climate change information and/or meeting minutes	✓
Chemical use/spray records and applicator certification		Research and discussion papers	✓
Tree improvement reports		Support for research and science	✓
Green-up records		External audit field inspections	✓
Free to grow records		External audit interviews (office and field)	✓
Planting program records		Phoenix records	✓
Harvest inspection records	✓	Cut control reports	✓
Road and bridge inspection records	✓	Road tracking report	✓
Pre-harvest inspection records	✓	SIC website	✓
Post-harvest inspection records	✓	Documents containing SFI logos	✓
Government compliance records (email)	✓		

CERTIFICATION DECISION SFI 2015-2019 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

Surveillance Audit

Based on the results of this surveillance audit it has been determined that the management system of Stuwix Resources Joint Venture is effectively implemented and meets the requirements relative to the scope of registration and audit criteria, therefore, a recommendation to maintain the registration is made to SAI Global.

SAI Global forestry specialist group registers/certifies forest companies to ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001, CSA Z809 and CSA Z804 SFM, SFI Forest Management, SFI CoC, SFI Fiber Sourcing, SFI Certified Sourcing Label, PEFC CoC, FSC® Forest Management, FSC® 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 for more information.

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