

NSF International Forestry Program Public Summary Audit Report The Summit Bechtel Reserve

SFI Forest Management

The SFI Program of The Summit Bechtel Reserve of Glen Jean, West Virginia has demonstrated conformance with the SFI 2015-2019 Standard and Rules®, Section 2 – Forest Management Standard, according to the NSF certification process.

The Summit Bechtel Reserve is located in Fayette and Raleigh Counties, near Beckley, West Virginia and is one of four facilities managed by the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). The Summit Bechtel Reserve is the home of the National Scout Jamboree, the Paul R. Christen National High Adventure Base, the James C. Justice National Scout Camp, and the John D. Tickle National Training and Leadership Center. The scope of this certification includes land management activities on 9,264 acres of the Summit Bechtel tract and 2,665 acres of the River Park Run tract. The Summit is the new home of achievement, adventure, and innovation in Scouting. With world-class facilities and a focus on outdoor action sports, the Summit welcomed Scouts to a whole new jamboree experience in summer 2013. 2017 is the next national jamboree and The Summit will also be hosting the 2019 World Jamboree.

The audit was performed by NSF on January 12-13, 2016 by an audit team headed by Norman Boatwright, Lead Auditor. Audit team members fulfill the qualification criteria for conducting audits contained in SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules®, Section 9 - Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation.

The objective of the audit was to assess conformance of the firm’s SFI Program to the requirements of the SFI 2015-2019 Standard and Rules, Section 2 – Forest Management.

The scope of the audit included forest management operations. Forest practices that were the focus of field inspections included those that have been under active management over the planning period of the past 3 years. In addition practices conducted earlier were also reviewed as appropriate (regeneration and BMP issues, for example), SFI obligations to promote sustainable forestry practices, to seek legal compliance, and to incorporate continual improvement systems were also within the scope of the audit.

The SFI Standard was used without modifying any requirements.

Several of the SFI Section 2 requirements were outside of the scope of The Summits SFI program and were excluded from the scope of the SFI Certification Audit as follows:

Requirement Number	Brief Description	Reason <i>(Note: see Matrix for full text of modified requirement)</i>
CI 2.1.3	Plantings of exotic tree species	Exotic trees are not planted on the scoped in property.
PM 5.2 & 5.3	Clearcut size and green up requirements	The Summit does not plan to clearcut
OBJ 8	Indigenous Peoples	There are no federally recognized tribes in WV.
CI 10.1.2	Research on genetically engineered trees	The Summit does not research genetically engineered trees.
OBJ 13	Public Land Management Responsibilities	The Summit does not have public land management responsibility.

Audit Process

NSF initiated the audit process with a readiness review to confirm the scope of the audit, review the SFI Indicators and evidence to be used to assess conformance, verify that The Summit was prepared to proceed to the audit, and to prepare a detailed audit plan. NSF then conducted the audit of conformance. A report was prepared and approved by an independent certification board member assigned by NSF. Follow-up or surveillance audits are required by SFI, Section 9. The initial surveillance audit is scheduled for October 24, 2016.

The audit was governed by a detailed audit plan designed to enable the audit team to efficiently determine conformance with the applicable requirements. The plan provided for the assembly and review of audit evidence consisting of documents, interviews, and on-site inspections of ongoing or completed forest practices.

During the audit, NSF reviewed a sample of the written documentation assembled to provide objective evidence of conformance. NSF also selected field sites for inspection based upon the risk of environmental impact, likelihood of occurrence, special features, and other criteria outlined in the NSF protocols. NSF selected and interviewed stakeholders such as contract loggers, landowners and other interested parties, and interviewed employees within the organization to confirm that the SFI Standard was understood and actively implemented.

The possible findings of the audit included Full Conformance, Major Non-conformance, Minor Non-conformance, Opportunities for Improvement, and Practices that exceeded the Basic Requirements of the standard.

Overview of Audit Findings

The Summit Bechtel Reserve was found to be in conformance with the standard. NSF determined that there were no minor non-conformances and identified two opportunities for improvement:

- CI 4.3.1 There is an opportunity to improve the use of information such as existing natural heritage data or expert advice in identifying or selecting ecologically important sites for protection.
- CL 6.1.1 There is an opportunity to improve the use of information such as existing natural heritage data, expert advice or stakeholder consultation in identifying or selecting special sites for protection.

These findings do not indicate a current deficiency, but served to alert The Summit to areas that could be strengthened or which could merit future attention.

NSF also identified two areas where forestry practices and operations of The Summit that exceed the basic requirements of the standard:

- CI 5.4.1: The primary objective of the Summit is to provide recreational opportunities to Boy Scouts and to the general public, when feasible. Opportunities include high adventure programs and scout camps. The National Training and Leadership Center provides courses that support adult volunteers and commissioned professionals, as well as youth participants and the national scout jamboree.
- CI 12.2.1: The Summit has approximately 32 miles of pedestrian and 36 miles of mountain bike trails and is currently working on developing a trail in the conservation easement that will address some of the requirements. Another trail, the McAllister Family Sustainability Trail, will have several stops related to forestry and soil and water conservation.

General Description of Evidence of Conformity

NSF's audit team used a variety of evidence to determine conformance. A general description of this evidence is provided below, organized by SFI Objective.

Objective 1 Forest Management Planning

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

Summary of Evidence: Procedures outlined in the Forest Management Plan and interviews provided the primary evidence for this objective.

Objective 2 Forest Health and Productivity

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

Summary of Evidence: Review of the Forest Management Plan and interviews indicate The Summit has programs for reforestation, for protection against common insects and diseases, for developing a forest that is resilient to wildfire, and for careful management of activities which could potentially impact soil and long-term productivity.

Objective 3 Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources

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

Summary of Evidence: Timber management activities have not occurred recently on the property included within the scope of certification. Review of the Forest Management Plan and interviews indicate The Summit has programs for the protection and maintenance of water resources.

Objective 4 Conservation of Biological Diversity

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

Summary of Evidence: Review of the Forest Management Plan, interviews, the development of a SWAP Habitat map and the site visit indicate The Summit has programs to conserve biological diversity

Objective 5 Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits

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

Summary of Evidence: Site visit and interviews indicate that visual quality is a primary objective of management operations.

Objective 6 Protection of Special Sites

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

Summary of Evidence: Review of the Forest Management Plan, interviews and the set aside of 100 acres of semi old growth indicated that special sites are protected when identified.

Objective 7 Efficient Use of Fiber Resources

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

Summary of Evidence: Review of the timber sale contract and interview with The Summit's forestry consultant indicate that timber sales will be closely monitored to ensure efficient utilization of resources.

Objective 8 Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights

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

Summary of Evidence: NA. There are no federally designated tribes in West Virginia.

Objective 9 Legal and Regulatory Compliance

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

Summary of Evidence: Review of the Forest Management Plan and interviews indicate that The Summit is committed to maintain legal and regulatory compliance.

Objective 10 Forestry Research, Science and Technology

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

Summary of Evidence: *The Summit has recently entered into an agreement with WVU to form a Joint Environmental Research Program whereby the Summit will allow WVU to develop and conduct research on the property.*

Objective 11 Training and Education

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

Summary of Evidence: *Review of the Forest Management Plan, timber sale contract and training meeting minutes indicate conformance to this objective.*

Objective 12 Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach

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

Summary of Evidence: *The Summit has made a commitment to hire, whenever possible, local personnel in management and construction roles.*

Objective 13 Public Land Management Responsibilities

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on public lands.

Summary of Evidence: *NA. The Summit does not have public land management responsibilities.*

Objective 14 Communications and Public Reporting

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

Summary of Evidence: *This is a certification audit so reporting requirements will begin next year. Review of procedures and interviews indicate that The Summit is capable of tracking the data necessary to complete the report.*

Objective 15. Management Review and Continual Improvement

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

Summary of Evidence: *Records of program reviews and from management review meetings were assessed, and staff was interviewed to confirm the requirements are met.*

Relevance of Forestry Certification

Third-party certification provides assurance that forests are being managed under the principles of sustainable forestry, which are described in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard as:

1. Sustainable Forestry

To practice sustainable forestry to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates reforestation and the managing, growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products and ecosystem services such as the conservation of soil, air and water quality, carbon, biological diversity, wildlife and aquatic habitats, recreation and aesthetics.

2. Forest Productivity and Health

To provide for regeneration after harvest and maintain the productive capacity of the forest land base, and to protect and maintain long-term forest and soil productivity. In addition, to protect forests from economically or environmentally undesirable levels of wildfire, pests, diseases, invasive exotic plants and animals and other damaging agents and thus maintain and improve long-term forest health and productivity.

3. Protection of Water Resources

To protect water bodies and riparian areas, and to conform with forestry best management practices to protect water quality.

4. Protection of Biological Diversity

To manage forests in ways that protect and promote biological diversity, including animal and plant species, wildlife habitats, and ecological or natural community types.

5. Aesthetics and Recreation

To manage the visual impacts of forest operations, and to provide recreational opportunities for the public.

6. Protection of Special Sites

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

7. Responsible Fiber Sourcing Practices in North America

To use and promote among other forest landowners sustainable forestry practices that are both scientifically credible and economically, environmentally and socially responsible.

8. Legal Compliance

To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations.

9. Research

To support advances in sustainable forest management through forestry research, science and technology.

10. Training and Education

To improve the practice of sustainable forestry through training and education programs.

11. Community Involvement and Social Responsibility

To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry on all lands through community involvement, socially responsible practices, and through recognition and respect of Indigenous Peoples' rights and traditional forest-related knowledge.

12. Transparency

To broaden the understanding of forest certification to the SFI Standard by documenting certification audits and making the findings publicly available.

13. Continual Improvement

To continually improve the practice of forest management, and to monitor, measure and report performance in achieving the commitment to sustainable forestry.

14. Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Illegal Logging in Offshore Fiber Sourcing

(Applies only to the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard)

To avoid wood fiber from illegally logged forests when procuring fiber outside of North America, and to avoid sourcing fiber from countries without effective social laws.

Source: Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Standard, 2015–2019 Edition

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