

SFI 2015-2019 – Public Summary Report

UPM Blandin

DESCRIPTION OF COMPANY

UPM Blandin forest lands are located near Grand Rapids in northern Minnesota. Privately managed forest land totals approximately 188,000 acres. This land, along with 200,000 cords of wood per year from private, county, and state/provincial land from a large area including the Lake States, Manitoba, and Ontario, feeds the UPM Blandin Mill.

The company SFI representative is Cheryl Adams.

AUDIT

During the period of June 14th to 17th UPM Blandin underwent a 24 month surveillance audit to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) 2015-2019 Forest Management (FM) Standard and/or the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing (FS) Standard.

The registration cycle is over three years with surveillance audits conducted annually. The audit assessed active and/or completed harvest operations through interviews with the company staff and contractors. The audit also assessed the SFI documentation and records at the company’s office including stakeholder and First Nations communication.

The 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) Standard ensuring the integrity and credibility of the audit process.

THE AUDIT TEAM

The SAI Global audit team who performed the audit consisted of Cindy Hutchison, RPF, audit team leader, and Dave Barker, RPF, audit team member. The auditors are Professional Foresters and certified auditors.

The audit was observed by Dick Peterson and Angela Yuska, from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources who have been tasked with monitoring the terms of the UPM Blandin Conservation Easement.

REGISTRATION TYPE

Certificate Type	SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard	SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard
Single site	X	X

MULTI-SITE / GROUP EVALUATION

Not applicable.

SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard

FOREST LAND AND MANGEMENT PLAN INCLUDED IN THE AUDIT SCOPE

UPM Blandin forest lands are located near Grand Rapids in northern Minnesota. Total ownership is approximately 188,000 acres. UPM's property lies principally in the Aitkin, Itasca, Koochiching and St. Louis State Counties. Major highways intersecting the forestlands include US highways 2, 71 and 169; State highways 1, 6, 38, 46, 65, 73, and 200; and numerous county and township roads. UPM Blandin has constructed and maintains approximately 140 miles of private forestry roads on its lands, plus numerous un-maintained skid trails. UPM Blandin land is open to public access under a conservation easement.

UPM Blandin land lies within four sub-sections of the National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units

- Chippewa Plains
- Nashwauk Uplands
- St. Louis Moraines
- Tamarack Lowlands

UPM's timber-productive forest land is currently composed of 28% softwood and 72% hardwood types. As with Minnesota overall, Aspen is by far the dominating tree covering 54% of the forest cover types on UPM Blandin's property.

The UPM Blandin approach is ecosystem based management which requires a number of ecologically adapted silviculture systems, hardwood and softwood management, natural regeneration and planting.

Forest land owned by UPM, Blandin is a valued resource where forest management decisions are informed by these principles and purposes:

- Optimizing timber production for the Blandin pulp and paper operations and other wood markets
- Protecting conservation values while maintaining a working forest
- Encouraging long-term, professional management of the forest resources
- Providing opportunities for public recreation in a manner consistent with the other purposes
- In a regional context
 - Landscape capability and the surrounding matrix of different ownerships
 - Ecologically based site level prescriptions, including fine scale inputs of plant communities, knowledge of soil organisms, animal population trends, and
 - Economic and social frameworks
- Cooperating with neighbouring and regional landowners in an organized fashion, to contribute to regional biodiversity and site level species richness, and encouraging our Private Forest Management clients to join the effort.

SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION

Forest management activities- planning harvesting, transportation and silviculture on Blandin feeland. There has been no modification to the scope since the last public summary report.

AUDIT PROCESS

During this audit, the audit team evaluated the company against the objectives listed in Appendix 3, Table 1. The evidence of compliance observed is listed in Appendix 3, Table 2.

A sample of field review sites were chosen from a list of active sites and sites where forest management activities occurred since the last audit. The site choice also considered activity type, and risk factors, related to the audit objectives selected for review, as well as the opportunity to verify implementation of corrective actions for previous non-conformities.

SUBSTITUTE INDICATORS

No substitute indicators were evaluated during this audit.

COMPLAINTS

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

SITES INSPECTED AND ASSESSMENT TIME

Audit Activity	Duration in days
Off-site preparation and on-site office review:	1.25
Field review:	1
Sites	Number inspected
Roads	4
Harvesting Blocks	6
Silviculture Sites	4
Operations visited: UPM Blandin feeland	

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Definitions for findings can be found in Appendix 1.

Areas of non-conformance

NC#	Type	Performance Measure #	Description	Corrective Action Plans
2016-01	Minor	3.1	Program to implement federal state or provincial water quality best management practices during all phases of management activities.	Action plan has been accepted and implementation will be reviewed during the next surveillance audit

Opportunities for improvement

Consider

- including Indigenous Peoples’ inquiries and concerns in the public inquiry summary spreadsheet to demonstrate requirements are met.
- including a reference to inspections/monitoring/evaluation of legal compliance as part of the “system to achieve compliance” in the Forestry Legal Compliance Procedure.
- discussing with MN forest resources council inclusion of BMPs for fuel management and carrying as per DOT requirements (noted a link on this page: <http://mn.gov/frc/forest-management-guidelines.html>)
- requesting that MN SIC forward a copy to all members of the SIC Annual Report.
- the needs for 12 inch CWD on small wood sites.
- evidence package updates (e.g. websites).
- formalizing the second management review.

Exceptional practices

- Loggers indicated the maps are easy to understand and follow.
- Continued streamlining of EMS documentation including removal of redundant procedures covered by other UPM Blandin procedures to which to Forestry Department subscribes.
- UPM Blandin supports and participates in long-term research on golden winged warbler’s decline.
- Extensive tamarack corduroy of the Arbo road approach.

Status of previous audit non-compliances

No non-conformities were raised during the previous audit.

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 is effectively implemented and meets the requirements relative to the scope of registration and audit criteria. The action plan related to the non-conformance has been reviewed and considered

acceptable. As applicable, any major non-conformance has been closed and implementation of action plan for minor non-conformance will be reviewed at the next surveillance audit. Therefore, a recommendation to maintain the registration is made to SAI Global.

SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard

PROGRAM PARTICIPANT'S FIBER PROCUREMENT AND/OR MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS

UPM Blandin Paper Mill situated in Grand Rapids, Minnesota, needs about 50% of total demand as procured wood. During 2015 the mill consumed about 207,000 cords of which 102,000 cords were purchased under controlled stumpage.

UPM has a purchased stumpage program. There are two categories of log inputs- A and B. All A wood comes from fee lands, or lands upon which UPM owns the stumpage. On B lands, UPM buys the wood mostly from regulated sources, such as County lands, which have a land department and inspect for logger conformance.

The majority of purchased wood is field assessed by UPM, and the loggers have a harvest plan map, showing requirements. For County and State purchased wood, a plan map is prepared by that agency. All purchase contracts have clauses allowing UPM to monitor conformance to Best Management Practices both shown on the plan and required by contract. For private wood, about 5% of UPM's total requirements comes from operations where the logger is well known to Blandin, and 5% where the owner chooses the logger. UPM has an inspection system that includes both and is risk based. It also conducts logger quality analyses year by year to show trends. Rights of inspection are in all purchase contracts. Minnesota Logger Education Program audits Master Loggers. The State of Minnesota and Counties are certified to a recognized forestry standard.

The location of the vast majority of the purchased wood comes from Minnesota, and very minor amounts come from Wisconsin and Canada. All wood from Canada is PEFC certified. Wisconsin has a master logger program. The audit focused on the highest risk procurement areas, which are private, uncertified lands, in the state of Minnesota.

SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION

Sourcing of fiber from the Lake States, Manitoba, and Ontario.

There has been no modification to the scope since the last public summary report.

AUDIT PROCESS

During this audit, the audit team evaluated the company against the objectives listed in Appendix 4, Table 1. The evidence of compliance observed is listed in Appendix 4, Table 2.

A sample of field review sites were chosen from a list of active sites and sites where activities were completed since the last audit. The site choice also considered activity type, and risk factors, related to the audit objectives selected for review, as well as the opportunity to verify implementation of corrective actions for previous non-conformities.

SUBSTITUTE INDICATORS

No substitute indicators were evaluated during this audit.

COMPLAINTS

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

MANUFACTURING UNITS SUPPLIED AND ASSESSMENT TIME

Audit Activity	Duration in days
Off-site preparation and on-site office review:	1
Field review:	1
Sites	Number inspected
Roads	2
Harvesting Blocks	2
Silviculture Sites	0
Manufacturing units supplied from the sites visited: UPM Blandin Paper Mill, Grand Rapids.	

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Definitions for findings can be found in Appendix 1.

Areas of non-conformance

Not applicable.

Opportunities for improvement

Consider

- including a reference to inspections/monitoring/evaluation of legal compliance as part of the “system to achieve compliance” in the Forestry Legal Compliance Procedure.
- discussing with MN forest resources council inclusion of BMPs for fuel management and carrying as per DOT requirements (noted a link on this page: <http://mn.gov/frc/forest-management-guidelines.html>)
- the needs for 12 inch CWD on small wood sites.
- evidence package updates (e.g. websites).
- formalizing the second management review.

Exceptional practices

- Loggers indicated the maps are easy to understand and follow.
- Continued streamlining of EMS documentation including removal of redundant procedures covered by other UPM Blandin procedures to which to Forestry Department subscribes.

- UPM Blandin supports and participates in long-term research on golden winged warbler's decline.
- Active support the excellent land MN SIC pamphlet: 2015 A Management Guide for Private Forest Landowners.
- Retention on purchased wood cutblocks.

Status of previous audit non-compliances

No non-conformities were raised during the previous audit.

CERTIFICATION DECISION SFI 2015-2019 FIBER SOURCING STANDARD

Surveillance Audit

Based on the results of this surveillance audit it has been determined that the management system 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.

Appendices

Appendix 1: DEFINITIONS

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 or registration cannot be achieved. Subsequently for surveillance audits, an action plan shall be implemented by the auditee within 60 days for the registration to be 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. Non resolved minor non-conformance will be escalated to a major non-conformance.

Opportunity for Improvement

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

Exceptional practices

Areas that are deemed to be outstanding practices.

Appendix 3: EVIDENCE OF CONFORMITY TO THE SFI 2015-2019 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

Table 1 Objectives Audited

Objective 1	Forest Management Planning	X
Objective 2	Forest Health and Productivity	Field only
Objective 3	Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources	X
Objective 4	Conservation of Biological Diversity	X
Objective 5	Management of Visual and Recreational Benefits	
Objective 6	Protection of Special Sites	
Objective 7	Efficient Use of Forest Resources	Field only
Objective 8	Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights	X

Objective 9	Legal and Regulatory Compliance	X
Objective 10	Forestry Research, Science and Technology	X
Objective 11	Training and Education	X
Objective 12	Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach	X
Objective 13	Public Land Management Responsibilities	N/A
Objective 14	Communications and Public Reporting	X
Objective 15	Management Review and Continual Improvement	X

Table 2 Evidence Observed

Environmental management system (EMS) Manual	X	Cutblock size calculations	
Written policies	X	Employee observation forms (species at risk, invasive plants, other values)	
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for best management practices	X	Pre-work discussions/meeting records	X
EMS and SFI field handbook	X	Monitoring records for non-timber values	X
Training records (staff and contractors)	X	Utilization records	X
SFI/EMS training agenda	X	Laws, legislation, regulations records	X
Health and safety manual and/or employee policy manual	X	Annual management review records	X
Timber supply review	X	Internal audit records	X
Maps (pre-harvest, harvest, post-harvest, and silviculture)	X	Corrective action logs	X
Timber development standards		Education/community involvement records	X
Non-timber values impact assessments (riparian, visual, recreation, biodiversity, cultural heritage, other:)		Records of public inquiries and complaints	X
GIS inventories (soils, forest, land classification, non-timber values)	X	Stakeholder communications records	X
Long term management plans and sustainable harvest level calculation	X	Agreements and communications with Indigenous communities	
Cutting/harvesting permits	X	Multi-licensee and/or government meeting minutes	X

Operational plans (annual, cutblock level)	X	Logging agreements and/or contracts	X
Wet/adverse weather plans or guidelines	X	Wood producer training programs	X
Reforestation plans	X	Wood producer information package	X
Pest management plan		SFI Annual Report	X
Fire preparedness plan	X	SFI and company websites	X
Spill prevention and response plan	X	SFI brochure	
Silviculture surveys and reports		SFI Implementation committee (participation/support)	X
Standards for seed use		Climate change information and/or meeting minutes	X
Chemical use/spray records and applicator certification		Research and discussion papers	X
Tree improvement reports		Support for research and science	X
Green-up records		External audit field inspections	X
Free to grow records		External audit interviews (office and field)	X
Planting program records	X	News article on research	X
Harvest inspection records	X	Road gate signs giving public information	X
Road and bridge inspection records	X		
Pre-harvest inspection records			
Post-harvest inspection records	X		
Government compliance records			

Appendix 4: EVIDENCE OF CONFORMITY TO SFI 2015-2019 FIBER SOURCING STANDARD

Table 1 Objectives Audited

Fiber Sourcing Within the United States and Canada		
Objective 1	Biodiversity in Fiber Sourcing	
Objective 2	Adherence to Best Management Practices	Field only
Objective 3	Use of Qualified Resource and Qualified Logging Professionals	X
Objective 4	Legal and Regulatory Compliance	X
Objective 5	Forestry Research, Science, and Technology	X

Objective 6	Training and Education	X
Objective 7	Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach	X
Objective 8	Public Land Management Responsibilities	N/A
Objective 9	Communications and Public Reporting	X
Objective 10	Management Review and Continual Improvement	X

Fiber Sourcing Outside the United States and Canada		
Objective 11	Promote Conservation of Biological Diversity, Biodiversity Hotspots and High-Biodiversity Wilderness Areas	
Objective 12	Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Illegal Logging	
Objective 13	Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Fiber Sourced from Areas without Effective Social Laws	

Table 2 Evidence Observed

Environmental management system (EMS) Manual	X	SFI Annual Report	X
Written policies	X	SFI and company websites	X
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for best management practices	X	SFI brochure	
EMS and SFI field handbook	X	SFI Implementation committee (participation/support)	X
Training records (staff and contractors)	X	External audit field inspections	X
SFI/EMS training agenda	X	External audit interviews (office and field)	X
Cutting/harvesting permits		Education/community involvement records	
Operational plans (annual, cutblock level)	X	Records of public inquiries and complaints	X
Wet/adverse weather plans or guidelines	X	Stakeholder communications records	
Reforestation plans		Logging agreements and/or contracts	X
Best management practices monitoring records	X	Wood producer training programs	X
Evaluation of best management practices	X	Wood producer information package	X
Government compliance records		Policies provided to wood producers	X

Pre-work discussions/meeting records		Education and outreach to forest landowners	X
Monitoring records for non-timber values		List of qualified logging professional/certified logging professional	X
Utilization records	X	Agreements for purchased stumpage	X
Laws, legislation, regulations records	X	Program to assess and address risk of Illegal logging	X
Corrective action logs	X	Research and discussion papers	X
Support for research and science	X	Climate change information and/or meeting minutes	X



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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