



**BUREAU  
VERITAS**

**Bureau Veritas Certification  
North America, Inc.  
SFI 2010:2014 Audit Report**

390 Benmar Dr., Suite 100  
Houston, TX 77060  
Phone (281) 986-1300: Toll Free (800) 937-9311

Company Name	American Forest Management (AFM) – PNW Group
Contact Person	Dennis Dart- Region Manager
Address	11415 NE 128th St Suite 110; Kirkland, WA 98034
Phone / Fax	425-820-3420
PQC Code	E01E

Contract Number:	US1477156	Certification Audit:		Re-Certification Audit:		X	Surveillance: (Indicate visit # or Pre-Assessment)	
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**Audit Summary**

**Introduction**

This report summarizes the results of the recertification audit conducted on American Forest Management – Pacific Northwest Group; headquartered in Kirkland, WA. AFM (formerly International Forestry Consultants) has been certified through PWC and has opted to not renew their certificate with that organization. Jim Colla, Bureau Veritas Certification Lead Auditor conducted the audit from May 22-24, 2013.

**Audit Scope, Objectives and Process**

The scope of the group certificate is “Management of Forest Lands”. This includes eight separate group members totaling approximately 71,429 acres. The goal is continued certification to the SFI 2010-2014 Standard, Objectives 1-7 and 14-20. Specifically, two objectives of the SFI audit were to verify that the Program Participant’s SFI Program is in conformance with the SFI objectives, performance measures, and indicators; and verify whether the Program Participant has effectively implemented its SFI Standard program requirements on the ground. Standard Bureau Veritas Certification protocols and forms were applied throughout the audit as provided by the July, 2012 version of the Bureau Veritas Certification Auditor Handbook and supplemental SFI Handbook. Field notes and an SFI indicator checklist were completed and contain specific information and audit notes.

The audit began at the AFM headquarters office in Kirkland, WA on May 22, 2013 with an opening meeting. The objectives for the recertification audit were outlined and the audit process for collecting evidence and making audit findings was explained. Process determination findings of non-conformance, opportunities for improvement, and notable practices were explained. Confidentiality was assured. The audit plan was discussed and agreed to, and the time and date of the closing meeting was confirmed for May 24, 2013. There were no substitutions or modifications of SFI indicators.

**Audit Plan**

**Date: Wednesday, May 22, 2013 (Kirkland office)**

Time	Activity	BVC Repr.	Company Repr.
8:00 AM	Opening Meeting	J. Colla	Dennis Dart & designated AFM staff
4:00 PM	Review day’s findings & decision on site visits	J. Colla	same

**Date: Thursday, May 23, 2013**

Time	Activity	BVC Repr.	Company Repr.
7:30 AM	Field audits TWR, WACF-Nisqually sites, field level indicators for Objectives 2-7, lunch in the field	J. Colla	Dennis Dart & designated AFM staff
3:30 PM	Management debrief	J. Colla	same
4:00 PM	Depart site		

**Date: Friday, May 24, 2013**

Time	Activity	BVC Repr.	Company Repr.
7:30 AM	Field audits Penguin Forest, PB Lumber sites, field level indicators for Objectives 2-7, lunch in the field	J. Colla	Dennis Dart & designated AFM staff
2:00 PM	Summarize audit findings	J. Colla	
2:30 PM	Closing meeting (Chehalis office)	J Colla	same
3:00 PM	Depart site		

**Company Information**

AFM is headquartered in Sumter, SC and Charlotte, NC and has been providing varied forestry services for over 40 years. AFM acquired International Forestry Consultants headquartered in Kirkland, WA in 2012. AFM is a full service forestry consulting firm. They offer a comprehensive range of professional forestry, mapping and arboricultural services and assists clients concerned with the management, acquisition and protection of forest resources. The AFM PNW Group presently contains eight members. AFM manages these lands by growing trees, harvesting and selling logs, reforestation, and maintaining and protecting the forest's health, while protecting and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat, soils, air and water quality and providing dispersed recreational opportunities.

**Multi-Site Requirements**

The company qualifies for group certification since the management system is controlled and directed by AFM staff working on behalf of group members under contractual agreements. The number of audited sites is based upon standard selection protocols, where the square root of the number of sites is rounded up to the next whole number. With nine sites including headquarters, this means at least three must be visited annually. The headquarters site is audited annually.

Sites	Sites Audited During this Event
Kirkland, WA	X
Naselle	
PB Lumber	X
North Cascades Timberland	
WACF Nisqually	X
WACF Toppenish	
TWR Timberlands	X
Penguin Forests	X
Seefeld Corporation	

**Audit Results**

The audit consisted of document and record reviews and interviews. In addition a number of field sites spread across four ownerships, including two of which were actively being harvested, were visited that represented a broad spectrum of activities AFM undertakes. Objectives 8-13 and 18 are not applicable.

Objective 1, Forest Management Planning: Forest Management Plans are developed for individual properties, and updated every 5-10 years. Management plans are developed to be flexible allowing resource managers the ability to adapt to fluctuating markets and to utilize new technologies and science to promote the sustainable use of the forest resource. Strategic harvest levels are based upon forest inventory, growth and yield calculations, regulatory constraints (RMZs, T & E species, etc.), aesthetics, and other non-timber constraints. The GIS system is complete and mature and includes fish & wildlife, water resources, soil, land classification, stand attributes, roads and numerous other attributes. Harvest does not exceed growth.

Objective 2, Forest Productivity: AFM designates reforestation of harvest units by planting or natural methods on state forest practice permits (FPA). Uneven-aged harvest techniques not requiring reforestation are identified on FPAs as regeneration not required. For harvest units with planned artificial reforestation (planting), seedlings will be contract grown at reputable industry nurseries 1-2 years prior to planting according to the long range harvest plan. Artificial reforestation of harvested sites will occur during the next possible planting season after site preparation when practical, but no later than two planting seasons after harvest. Each unit is formally surveyed for survival at three and six months, with follow up surveys on a regular basis. No exotic species observed on any sites visited in the field. AFM's policy is to use the minimum amount of chemical necessary to accomplish control objectives. Only one unit was sprayed, application is ground based. Spray work is conducted by contractors under the supervision of AFM foresters. All chemicals applied are registered and labeled for use in the State of WA. Contractor and AFM spray records and reports provide evidence application was done in compliance with label and legal requirements. No overspray observed. AFM is continually seeking to implement IPM strategies. Examples include assessment and quick actions associated with a 2011 ice storm to reduce fire or pest risk. Multiple erosion control methods used including timing of operations (use restrictions), location of roads and trails, rocking roads, cross-drainage, and filter strips. AFM strives to reuse existing roads, trails and landings in stable locations out of RMAs and minimize new construction. Contractors are well versed in erosion control measures, no evidence of accelerated erosion observed. Excellent protection of residual trees noted throughout. AFM strives to maintain healthy forest by active management; insect and diseases are at endemic levels.

Objective 3, Protection of Water Resources: AFM follows and exceeds mandatory requirements of the WA FPA; a comprehensive set of standards (BMPs) designed to protect soil, air, water and wildlife resources. These have been incorporated into the company contracts and operating procedures. Contractors interviewed had excellent BMP knowledge. Sites are monitored at least weekly to ensure compliance. No evidence observed of any BMP infraction or excess sediment delivery to streams. Water resource protection is accomplished by identification in the map layer, flagging on the ground, and pre and post-harvest assessments.

Objective 4, Conservation of Biological Diversity: AFM management practices consider the retention of habitat in compliance with current forest practice regulations. Best efforts will be made to protect unique habitats not specifically protected by rule and preserve or manage to enhance micro sites in favor of wildlife. Prior to unit layout every unit is assessed for T&E and sensitive species, snags, down wood, residual trees, cultural features, and aquatic features. These features are mapped in the GIS. Noxious weed control is an integral component of the land management program. No FECV have been designated, and old-growth or T&E species are not present on any of the properties visited.

Objective 5, Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits: AFM follows requirements within the WA FPA's. While state designated highway are the primary threshold for implementing aesthetics mitigation measures, field foresters qualitatively assess each unit for aesthetic impacts and make adjustments to cutting prescriptions, by leaving trees or adjusting unit boundaries, to mitigate for visual impacts. In 2012 average clearcut size was 33 acres; with the largest being 105 acres and the smallest being one acre. Riparian corridors, group retention patches, and individual tree retention for wildlife were present throughout. Green up requirements have been met throughout. AFM provides passive recreation on all properties under management so long as it does not conflict with wildlife management in the region. AFM properties are gated and signed to inform users of restrictions on the property.

Objective 6, Protection of Special Sites: While AFM has not designated any special sites per se; areas with unique characteristics, including cultural, biological or geologic features will be protected to ensure the integrity of the sites. Those protections will, at a minimum comply with state and federal regulations. Unique

characteristics are monitored by way of maintaining a current data base from a number of publicly available sources. Should a unique finding occur, stakeholders will be contacted to provide input for development of appropriate management strategies.

**Objective 7, Efficient Use of Forest Resources:** A number of sorts may be produced on each job. Utilization is an inspected item on each job at regular intervals. AFM has a robust system to monitor and track the removal of forest products.

**Objective 14, Legal Compliance:** A logging or silvicultural contract cannot be issued without an established FPA permit. AFM utilizes site visits and documented inspection reports to ensure compliance. An internal feedback and corrective action program is in place. Furthermore, State FPFs monitor for regulatory compliance. The system is understood by all AFM foresters and contractors interviewed. There have been no non-compliances i.e. Stop Work Orders or non-compliances issued by WDNR in the last year. AFM has a formal H&S program designed to ensure applicable federal and state H&S requirements are met. H&S requirements are posted in various locations as prescribed by law.

**Objective 15, Forestry Research:** AFM participates and provides funding for and through a number of organizations to advance forestry research. These include SMC, FBRI and NWTIC. AFM provides funding for and participate in the SIC.

**Objective 16, Training and Education:** The commitment statement is contained in the company manual and is updated as needed. AFM personnel are provided a SFI Binder including AFM's SFI Manual. Roles and responsibilities are covered at monthly SFI meetings. Staff compliance and promotion of the standard is incorporated into the employee review process. AFM requires that contractors be professionally trained; the WCLA program is the SFI recognized training standards for contractors.

**Objective 17, Community Involvement:** Through the SIC and individually, AFM participates in the development of educational newsletters for small forest landowners and consulting foresters that focus on biodiversity, wildlife, invasive species, and benefits that forest provide. The WA SIC has a process for reporting inconsistent practices. No notices of inconsistent practices were received in 2012.

**Objective 19, Communications and Public reporting:** The 2012 AFM Audit Report, prepared by PWC, is posted on the SFI Website. All records necessary for reporting to SFI are maintained electronically and were reviewed as part of this audit.

**Objective 20, Management Review and Continuous Improvement:** AFM conducts annual reviews to evaluate effectiveness of SFI procedures and programs. AFM Management conducts internal monitoring of contract files and management activities to ensure policies and standards are covered. AFM management utilizes the internal review process to identify areas for improvement. Results are documented in an annual monitoring report. AFM is constantly striving for improved efficiencies and performance at all levels in the organization

## **Findings**

**Previous non-conformances:** No non-conformities identified by the previous certifier in 2012.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** Objective 14, PM 14.1 (2) - AFM utilizes site visits and inspection reports to ensure compliance with applicable regulations. Contracts require compliance with applicable laws; however it is noted foresters had varying levels of understanding regarding compliance related to forest labor laws for activities related to such practices as tree planting and pre-commercial thinning.

**Notable Practices:** Objective 2, PM 2.4, (1) - AFM monitors forest stands regularly for indications of insect and disease invasion or abiotic problems. Following a severe ice storm in 2011 AFM was extremely proactive in initial damage assessments, then developing assessment criteria to formally stratify damage and determine silvicultural options; then adjust harvest schedules as needed to quickly salvage timber and reduce future risk of pest infestations or increased fire risk.

**SFI reporting:** The posting of AFM's (then International Forestry Consultants) 2012 Audit Report on the SFI website was verified.

### **Conclusions**

In the opinion of the auditor, results of this recertification audit confirm that the SFI 2010-2014 forest land management system of AFM- PNW Group is suitable, effective and mature. Recertification is recommended.

### **Surveillance Audit Schedule**

Surveillance audits should be schedule for May or June over the next two years, with a recertification audit occurring in 2016.

**SEE SF61 FOR AUDIT NOTES**

Summary of Audit Findings:						
Audit Date(s):	From: May 22, 2013			To: May 24, 2013		
Number of SF02's Raised:	Major:		0		Minor:	0
Is a follow up visit required:	Yes	No	X	Date(s) of follow up visit:		
Follow-up visit remarks:						
N/A						
Team Leader Recommendation:						
Corrective Action Plans Accepted	Yes	No		Date:	NA	
Proceed to/Continue Certification	Yes	X	No	Date:	May 24, 2013	
All NCR's Cleared (2012- 2 Minor)	Yes	No		Date:	NA	
Standard audit conducted against:						
1)	SFIS 2010-2014 Forest Management		2)			
Team Leader (1):		Team Members (2,3,4...) – N/A				
Jim Colla		2)				
		3)				
Scope of Supply: (scope statement must be verified and appear in the space below)						
Management of Forest Lands						
Accreditation's	ANAB					
Number of Certificates	1					
Proposed Date for Next Audit Event						
Date	May, 2014					
Audit Report Distribution						
AFM: Dennis Dart; dennis@infoforestry.com						
Bureau Veritas Certification: cornelia.holmes@us.bureauveritas.com						

Clause	Audit Report
Opening Meeting	<p>Participants: Dennis Dart, Region Manager; Tom Hanson, Client Relations; Dan Thomas, SFI Coordinator; and Jim Colla, Lead Auditor</p> <p>Discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Introductions</li> <li>➤ Scope of the audit</li> <li>➤ Audit schedule/plan</li> <li>➤ Nonconformance types – Major / Minor</li> <li>➤ Review of previous non-conformances - 0</li> <li>➤ Process approach to auditing and audit sampling</li> <li>➤ Confidentiality agreement</li> <li>➤ Termination of the audit</li> <li>➤ Appeals process</li> <li>➤ Closing meeting timing</li> </ul>
Closing Meeting	<p>Participants: Dennis Dart, Region Manager; Tom Hanson, Client Relations; Dan Thomas, SFI Coordinator; Rich Runyon, District Manager; Kyle Galloway, Forester and Jim Colla, Lead Auditor</p> <p>See attached list; and Jim Colla, Lead Auditor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Introductions and appreciation for selecting Bureau Veritas Certification.</li> <li>➤ Review of audit process - process approach and sampling.</li> <li>➤ Review of OFIs (1) and System Strengths (1)</li> <li>➤ Non-conformances - 0</li> <li>➤ Date for next audit.</li> <li>➤ Reporting protocol and timing</li> </ul>

