



**BUREAU
VERITAS**

**Bureau Veritas Certification
North America, Inc.
SFI Forest Management Audit Report**

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Contract Number	US1071418

Certification Audit:		Re-Certification Audit:		Surveillance Audit:	1	Scope extension audit:	
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Audit Summary

Introduction

This report summarizes the results of the surveillance audit process conducted on the State of Maine's Department of Conservation Bureau of Parks and Lands' SFI program for forest management operations on their 616,952 acres of public lands. The audit occurred November 9-13, 2015 in the State's West Region. Mr. Brian Callaghan, Bureau Veritas Certification Lead Auditor, served as lead auditor throughout the audit process, with Mr. Steve Tomlins as a team auditor.

Audit Scope, Objectives and Process

The scope of the audit is "Management of Maine Public Lands". The audit was conducted against the SFI 2015-2019 Standard and Rules. A document review was conducted at the company's West regional office in Farmington Maine. The objective of the document review was to verify that the Program Participant's SFI Program is in conformance with the SFI Objectives, Performance Measures, and Indicators. As a surveillance audit, the audit team covered objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 13, and 14. As this audit involves an upgrade to the standard all new or revised indicators were assessed in order to upgrade the certificate to the new standard. The objective of the field audits was to verify whether the Program Participant has effectively implemented its SFI Standard program requirements on the ground. There was no substitution or modification of indicators. Standard Bureau Veritas Certification protocols and forms were applied throughout the audit as provided by the most recent version of the Bureau Veritas Certification SFI Auditor Handbook available on the auditor access website.

Audit Plan

The audit began and ended with opening and closing meetings held at the West Regional office in Farmington Maine. The audit involved a review of Bureau documents and data, selection of field sites for inspection, field inspections of 17 tracts where operations have recently occurred or were occurring, and visits to a variety of recreation values (i.e. trails, campsites, boat launches). A copy of the audit plan is available at the Bureau Veritas Certification's Houston office.

Company Information

The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry is composed of four bureaus; Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, the Bureau of Forestry, Bureau of Resource

Information and Land Use Planning, and the Bureau of Parks and Lands. The Bureau of Parks and Lands manages 556,121 acres of forest lands acquired through the *Lands for Maine's Future* program. Management of these "public reserved" lands is the responsibility of the Division of Lands within the Bureau of Parks and Lands (the Bureau or BPL). For the purposes of forest management the Bureau is organized into three regions (North, East, and West). The State holds all ownership rights to its lands and all areas are open to public recreation activities.

The Public Reserved Lands are managed for multiple-uses under a "dominant use" system which ensures that sensitive resources such as rare plants and backcountry recreation areas are not disturbed by more intensive management activities. The mission of the Bureau is to improve the value of the public forests it manages. Bureau staffs develop long-term forest management plans and stand level silvicultural prescriptions. The State Forests lands are 40% mixedwood, 31% softwood and 29% hardwood. The forests managed by the Bureau are generally older than the surrounding forests and the Bureau has identified old growth forests throughout their ownership. Partial harvest techniques are used to harvest and regenerate the forest.

Audit Results

During the audit 17 field sites were inspected. Eight sites were visited where harvest operations had been undertaken – all were found to meet or exceed the guidelines and requirements. Four road maintenance and water crossing projects were found to be well executed. The remaining sites were recreation and FECV sites. The auditors found high levels of conformance to the SFI standard throughout the audit.

Objective 1-Forest Management Planning:

State lands managed by the Bureau of Parks and Lands of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry are managed with the objective of improving the value of the forest resource. This objective has lead the Bureau to manage lands in such a way as to improve the condition of the forest, rather than maximizing timber or revenue production. Multiple use management is a critical component of the bureau's approach with a heavy emphasis on non-motorized recreational activities. Harvest levels have traditionally been well below the annual growth in the forest. Resource analysis shows that the current harvest is less than 60% of annual growth. Legislature continues to look at increasing the available harvest. The current inventory is stand based and relies on FIA data. A new inventory is being prepared by a consultant based in 2013/2014 photography.

Forest management on BPL lands relies on uneven-aged management and partial harvesting systems to naturally regenerate forests of native species. Even-aged management and clear cutting are rarely used with average clearcut size being extremely small (e.g. 1 to 2 hectares). Rotation ages are longer than average in the region ranging from 60 to 120 years. A 15 to 20 year cutting cycle is used in the uneven aged hardwood stands

Objective 2-Forest Health and Productivity:

Silvicultural prescriptions are made under the Prescription Review and Multiple Use Report. All managed areas are under natural regeneration methods of management. There is a Harvest Evaluation Report that is completed after each area is harvested. In this report, there is a regeneration damage assessment that is assessed for post-harvest conditions. The targeted leave trees or desirable species are noted in the Stand Prescription and Management Recommendations.

There has been management applications used at the stand level to target the harvest of spruce within

a timbered stand to reduce the threat of spruce budworm. The Bureau has a policy in place to protect the forest resource against loss or damage in their Integrated Forest Policy manual.

There was no rutting observed during the field audit and little or no damage from skid trails. Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands has a Soil Disturbance Policy requiring staff and contractors to take all steps and precautions, including BMP implementation, to avoid and minimize soil disturbance. This criteria is also applied in the Harvest Evaluation report. Maine B of P&L follows the Maine BMP handbook in their use of erosion control methods to improve soil and site productivity.

Objective 3-Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources:

Site reports are utilized to document inspections and BMP compliance. Use of trained loggers and supervision by professional foresters comprise the BMP implementation program. Operations are set up to be harvested during set operating seasons. No evidence of accelerated soil erosion was seen on any of the sites visited. Mechanical harvesting was used throughout, with slash being scattered in the forest and on designated trails. Seasonal harvest and road/trail use restrictions are in place as needed and as determined by the forester in charge.

BPL personnel routinely consult with state agency personnel on matters related to water quality and fish habitat. Streams are mapped. Streamside zones and wet areas are typically no harvest zones. No evidence of non-compliance with water body protection requirements on any of the sites visited.

Objective 4-Conservation of Biological Diversity:

Biodiversity, wildlife protection, habitat enhancement, and protection and diversification of ecological community types are primary objectives throughout Maine BPL's entire program, and implementation was confirmed on 12 of 17 tracts field inspected. (remaining sites were roads or recreation). The Forester Guidelines, which contain wildlife guidelines and protections for other ecological values such as vernal pools, is used and is currently under revision. Though there are few identified T&E species present, protection and habitat enhancement are priorities for Maine BPL. T&E knowledge and implementation was confirmed during field inspections and documentation checked.

One recently discovered FECV was visited during the audit. On the Bigelow tract there is only the second known location of the Roaring River Mayfly (a G1 species). This short stream is buffered to ensure the river bed cannot be disturbed. Forest operations are not allowed within 100 feet of the stream. The protection measures appeared to be excellent.

Objective 5-Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits:

Not Audited

Objective 6-Protection of Special Sites:

Not Audited

Objective 7-Efficient Use of Fiber Resources:

Not Audited.

Objective 8: Recognize and Respect Indigenous People's Rights:

Indigenous People are involved in the planning for each forest. Tribes are invited to participate, identify values, and consult on protective measures in the forest management plan. Certain forest products are reserved for Indigenous People, such as black and brown ash, which I valued for ceremonies and crafts.

Objective 9-Legal and Regulatory Compliance:

NOT AUDITED

Objective 10-Forestry Research, Science and Technology:

NOT AUDITED

Objective 11-Training and Education:

Objective 12-Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach:

Not Audited

Objective 13: Public Land Management Responsibilities:

The lands the Bureau manages are public lands with a statutory designation to manage state parks, historic sites, public persevered lands, and non-reserved lands. The Bureau has a detailed and public planning process for each of its forest. Forest management plans are 15 year comprehensive management plans which are reviewed and revised if necessary. The planning process starts with an advisory committee involving the general public, adjoining landowners, ENGOs, etc. who are invited via direct contact seeking broad representation. Draft plan goes to a public meeting to solicit public feedback. When tribal lands are within a plan, affected tribes are directly contacted to be on advisory committee, and are invited to provide input throughout.

Objective 14-Communications and Public Reporting:

The Bureau continues to meet their reporting requirements to SFI

Objective 15-Management Review:

Regional Managers meetings are held on a monthly basis to review program delivery and performance. SFI topics are always on the agenda. At a higher level the Bureau has a Silvicultural Advisory Committee of outside experts, which they use for program review.

Findings

Previous non-conformances:

Two previous NC were issued in 2014.

NC3 (PM16.1 I 3) SFI awareness training was undertaken across BPL. During the audit there were no instances of staff showing poor awareness of SFI.

NC4 (PM3.1) A poorly constructed water crossing was repaired and rehabilitated to close this non-conformance. No instances of poor crossings or sedimentation entering streams were recorded during the 2015 audit.

Non-conformances: None Issued

Opportunities for Improvement: None Issued

Notable Practices: None Issued

Logo/label use:

The Bureau does not use either the SFI or Bureau Veritas trademarks.

SFI reporting:

A copy of the Maine BPL audit report can be found on the SFI website,

Conclusions

A closing meeting was held on November 13 in the Farmington, Maine office of the Bureau of Parks and Lands. The closing meeting covered audit activities, and audit findings. There were no negative findings in relation to the SFI 2015 standard. The Bureau met the requirement of all new and revised indicators and as such they meet the requirements of the 2015-2019 SFI Standards and Rules for forest management. It is recommended that certification be continued and the certificate be upgraded to the new standard.

SEE SF61 FOR AUDIT NOTES

Summary of Audit Findings:									
Audit Date(s):		From: Nov 9 2015				To: Nov 13 2015			
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:									
Team Leader Recommendation:									
Corrective Action Plan(s) Accepted		Yes		No		N/A	X	Date:	
Proceed to/Continue Certification		Yes	X	No		N/A		Date:	Nov 13 2015
All NCR's Closed		Yes		No		N/A	X	Date:	
Standard audit conducted against:									
1)	SFI 2015-2019 FM Standard			3)					
2)				4)					
Team Leader (1):			Team Members (2,3,4...)						
Brian Callaghan			2) Steve Tomlin						
			3)						
			4)						
			5)						
Scope of Supply: (scope statement must be verified and appear in the space below)									
<i>Management of Maine Public Lands</i>									
Accreditation's		ANAB							
Number of Certificates		4							
Proposed Date for Next Audit Event									
Date	October 2016								
Audit Report Distribution									
Tom Charles - tom.t.charles@maine.gov									
Dawn Komnick									

Clause	Audit Report
Opening Meeting	Participants: Tom Charles, Pete Smith, Callaghan, Tomlin, Mandy Farrar, Matthew Faust, Discussions: Joe Stephenson, Joe Wiley, Jeff Bantlet, Marc albert, Ben Webb <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introductions ➤ Scope of the audit ➤ Audit schedule/plan ➤ Nonconformance types – Major / Minor ➤ Review of previous nonconformances – 2 closed. ➤ Process approach to auditing and audit sampling ➤ Confidentiality agreement ➤ Termination of the audit ➤ Appeals process ➤ Closing meeting timing
Closing Meeting	Participants: Pete Smith, Callaghan, Tomlin, Joe Stephenson, Joe Wiley, Jeff Bantlet, Marc Discussions: albert, Ben Webb <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introductions and appreciation for selecting Bureau Veritas Certification. ➤ Review of audit process - process approach and sampling. ➤ Review of OFIs and System Strengths ➤ Nonconformances - 0 ➤ Date for next audit. ➤ Reporting protocol and timing