

FOREST MANAGEMENT AND STUMP-TO-FOREST GATE CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY SURVEILLANCE EVALUATION REPORT

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Managed Forest Law Tree Farm Group

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CERTIFIED	EXPIRATION
02/Dec/2013	01/Dec/2018

DATE OF FIELD AUDIT
05-09/June/2016
DATE OF LAST UPDATE
13/July/2016

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Foreword

Cycle in annual surveillance audits			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 st annual audit	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 nd annual audit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 rd annual audit	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 th annual audit
Name of Forest Management Enterprise (FME) and abbreviation used in this report:			
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Managed Forest Law Tree Farm Group (MFL)			

All certificates issued by SCS under the aegis of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) require annual audits to ascertain ongoing conformance with the requirements and standards of certification. A public summary of the initial evaluation is available on the FSC Certificate Database <http://info.fsc.org/>.

Pursuant to FSC and SCS guidelines, annual / surveillance audits are not intended to comprehensively examine the full scope of the certified forest operations, as the cost of a full-scope audit would be prohibitive and it is not mandated by FSC audit protocols. Rather, annual audits are comprised of three main components:

- A focused assessment of the status of any outstanding conditions or Corrective Action Requests (CARs; see discussion in section 4.0 for those CARs and their disposition as a result of this annual audit);
- Follow-up inquiry into any issues that may have arisen since the award of certification or prior to this audit; and
- As necessary given the breadth of coverage associated with the first two components, an additional focus on selected topics or issues, the selection of which is not known to the certificate holder prior to the audit.

Organization of the Report

This report of the results of our evaluation is divided into two sections. Section A provides the public summary and background information that is required by the Forest Stewardship Council. This section is made available to the general public and is intended to provide an overview of the evaluation process, the management programs and policies applied to the forest, and the results of the evaluation. Section A will be posted on the FSC Certificate Database (<http://info.fsc.org/>) no less than 90 days after completion of the on-site audit. Section B contains more detailed results and information for the use by the FME.

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SECTION A – PUBLIC SUMMARY

1. General Information

1.1 Annual Audit Team

Auditor Name:	Kyle Meister	Auditor role:	Lead FSC Auditor
Qualifications:	<p>Kyle Meister is a Certification Forester with SCS Global Services (SCS). He has been with SCS since 2008 and has conducted FSC FM pre-assessments, evaluations, and surveillance audits in Brazil, Panama, Mexico, Costa Rica, Bolivia, Indonesia, India, Japan, New Zealand, Spain, and all major forest producing regions of the United States. He has conducted COC assessments in Oregon, Pennsylvania, and California. Mr. Meister has successfully completed CAR Lead Verifier, ISO 9001:2008 Lead Auditor, and SA8000 Social Systems Introduction and Basic Auditor Training Courses. He holds a B.S. in Natural Resource Ecology and Management and a B.A. in Spanish from the University of Michigan; and a Master of Forestry from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.</p>		
Auditor Name:	Mike Ferrucci	Auditor role:	Lead ATFS Auditor
Qualifications:	<p>Mike Ferrucci is the SFI Program Manager for NSF – International Strategic Registrations and is responsible for all aspects of the firm’s SFI Certification programs. He is qualified as a RAB-QSA Lead Auditor (ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems), as an SFI Lead Auditor for Forest Management, Procurement, and Chain of Custody, as an FSC Lead Auditor Forest Management and Chain of Custody, as a Tree Farm Group Certification Lead Auditor, and as a GHG Lead Auditor. Mike has led Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI) certification and precertification reviews throughout the United States. He has also led or participated in joint SFI and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification projects in nearly one dozen states and a joint scoping or precertification gap-analysis project on tribal lands throughout the United States. He also co-led the pioneering pilot dual evaluation of the Lakeview Stewardship Unit on the Fremont-Winema National Forest.</p> <p>Mike Ferrucci has 33 years of forest management experience. His expertise is in sustainable forest management planning; in certification of forests as sustainably managed; in the application of easements for large-scale working forests, and in the ecology, silviculture, and management of mixed species forests, with an emphasis on regeneration and management of native hardwood species. Mike has conducted or participated in assessments of forest management operations throughout the United States, with field experience in 4 countries and 33 states. Mike has been a member of the Society of American Foresters for over thirty-five years. He is Past Chair of the SFI Auditor’s Forum. Mike is also a Lecturer at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, where he has taught graduate courses and workshops in forest management, harvesting operations, professional forest ethics, private forestry, and financial analysis.</p>		
Auditor Name:	Tucker Watts	Auditor role:	Assistant FSC/ATFS auditor
Qualifications:	<p>Tucker Watts has over 30 years’ experience in forest management, primarily in the</p>		

	southern U.S. He worked for many years for International Paper Company, first as a land management and procurement forester, then as an analyst, and finally as an environmental manager with considerable involvement in forest certification. Tucker has a BS in Forestry from Louisiana Tech, and MS in Forestry from Mississippi State University, and an MBA from Centenary College. He has participated in many forestry organizations, notably as a Trainer in the Louisiana Master Logger Program, as a team member for “Recommended Forestry Best Management Practices for Louisiana” and on various SFI State Implementation Committees. Tucker is trained as a Tree Farm Group Certification Auditor and has experience in SFI and FSC auditing from both sides, as an auditor and as the management representative of an organization being audited. Audit experience includes audits of pulp and paper mills, container and box companies, printers, distributors, and audits of recovered fiber and recycled content.
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1.2 Total Time Spent on Evaluation

A. Number of days spent on-site assessing the applicant:	4
B. Number of auditors participating in on-site evaluation:	3
C. Additional days spent on preparation, stakeholder consultation, and post-site follow-up:	3
D. Total number of person days used in evaluation:	15

1.3 Standards Employed

1.3.1. Applicable FSC-Accredited Standards

Title	Version	Date of Finalization
FSC-US Forest Management Standard	V1-0	8 – July – 2010
FSC standard for group entities in forest management groups (FSC-STD-30-005)	V1-0	31 – August – 2009
All standards employed are available on the websites of FSC International (www.fsc.org), the FSC-US (www.fscus.org) or the SCS Standards page (www.scsglobalservices.com/certification-standards-and-program-documents). Standards are also available, upon request, from SCS Global Services (www.SCSglobalServices.com).		

1.3.2. SCS Interim FSC Standards

Title	Version	Date of Finalization
SCS FSC Chain of Custody Indicators for Forest Management Enterprises	V5-1	3 – December – 2012
This SCS Interim Standard was developed by modifying SCS’ Generic Interim Standard to reflect forest management in the region and by incorporating relevant components of the Draft Regional / National Standard and comments from stakeholders. More than one month prior to the start of the field evaluation, the SCS Draft Interim Standard for the country / region was sent out for comment to stakeholders identified by FSC International, SCS, the forest managers under evaluation, and the National Initiative. A copy of the standard is available at www.scsglobalservices.com/certification-standards-and-program-documents or upon request from SCS Global Services (www.SCSglobalServices.com).		

2 Annual Audit Dates and Activities

2.1 Annual Audit Itinerary and Activities

6 – June – 2016	
FMU/Location/ sites visited	Activities/ notes
(all auditors) 7:30 AM	Opening Meeting: Introductions, client update, review audit scope, audit plan, intro/update to FSC and SCS standards and protocols, review of open CARs/OBS, final site selection
Site visits	<p>Ferrucci: Gordon, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16-005-2015 (280 acres) Walked significant portion of parcel, confirming healthy forests and ample natural regeneration in Stand 12 harvested 5 years ago. Stand 1 not yet harvested likely due to low stocking and wet conditions. 2. 16-014-2013(160 acres) Objectives not fully described on portions of plan available for this site, but plans for adjacent tracts of same owner state ecological forestry objectives- older forest, high stocking, closed-canopy, more pine, and aesthetic quality of lakes. Reviewed several areas: a) Clearcut with Red Pine Reserves 3 years ago before enrolled in MFL, significant scrub oak layer; herbicides Accord XRT, Chopper Gen 2 and Oust broadcast spray applied by contractor Future Forests in August 2014, disk-trenched, planted Red Pine and White Pine Spring 2015; b) Stand 21, 55 acres recently-completed harvest to remove remaining poor-quality Jack Pine and scrub oak left from past harvest. Starting to treat dense scrub oak layer using mechanical means, will then spray and plant; c) Lakes, driveway, house that has “FireWise” landscaping, plantings; d) Similar to b except more-complete efforts to treat dense scrub oak layer using mechanical means. 3. 16-011-2015 (16-004-1998 old MFL number) (34 acres) Recently-completed 5 acre regeneration harvest removing Aspen, Jack Pine and Scrub Oak and retaining all Red Pine. WDNR private lands forester combined many small stands from several MFL parcels with mandatory harvest practices, all located on sandy sites, to find a buyer for harvest during a rainy time in the fall of 2015. No soil impacts and excellent utilization as well as ample new Northern Pin Oak seedlings were observed. 4. 16-006-2014 (30 acres) Stand 1 (22 acres) had a coppice regeneration harvest (Aspen and hardwood) completed in summer 2015. Retention was per plan including Red and White Pine and regeneration patches of Aspen and Oak; buffered Chain Lake and adjacent sphagnum swamp. Interviewed Jeff Dedeleone, Forman for Max Erickson Logging; Jeff and most of the company’s loggers (there are 4 crews) have FISTA training. 5. 16-005-1991 (40 acres) Stand 2 (19 acres) having a harvest of all

	<p>Jack Pine; final loads of wood were recently trucked. Logger Dale Johnson hand-felled trees and yarder logs with a forwarder, resulting in well-distributed tops and retention of Red and White Pine regeneration at levels not normally seen following heavy cutting. Larger Red Pine also retained, leaving an excellent and diverse pine stand.</p>
	<p>Meister: Brule, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16-028-2003 (80 ac): 12 ac marked aspen regeneration harvest with planning individual and clumped retention of bur oak and black spruce; most likely will be winter-logged under frozen conditions. Walk-through of property to view: sale boundaries, wet and dry meadows, riparian features, and other stands. Interview with landowner, who confirmed no use of chemicals. 2. 16-228-1999 (200 ac): 16 ac marked aspen regeneration harvest; most likely will be winter-logged under frozen conditions. Few other merchantable tree species present in overstory. Discussion about administrative process to increase sale sizes through an amendment and alteration of stand sizes. 3. 04-002-2007 (160 ac): 55 ac completed aspen regeneration harvest with individual and clumped retention of bur oak, black spruce, birch, and snags. Ample slash left onsite for nutrient cycling and wildlife. Observation of riparian area and low impact logging. Natural Heritage Index hits; logged in winter under frozen conditions to avoid any potential adverse impacts to species that may be present. Interview with timber buyer and owner's representative. 4. 16-088-2009 (58 ac): Planned regeneration (29 ac) and overstory removal (24 ac) harvest of two stands to occur within next eight years. Regeneration site includes objective to regenerate aspen and retain components of some other species such as red oak, black spruce, balsam fir, white pine, red maple, sugar maple, etc. The overstory removal stand will have retention focused on sub-merchantable material and larger oak for wildlife benefits. Balsam fir is expected to be most abundant with a mix of several hardwood species. Walk-through of stands and utility right-of-way. 5. Brule office: review of MFL group member records maintained onsite. Review of staff training records. No chemicals applied by group members sampled.
	<p>Watts: Pattison, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16-004-2004 (26 acres) Mandatory regeneration harvest and thinning in 2019. Due to EAB, Ash will be removed. Management plan will be updated to note change. Maple and Elm will be retained. BA of 60–70 retained. Sale is marginal due to size and winter harvest requirement. No issues identified. 2. 16-026-2004 (34 acres) Selective harvest and thinning completed in 2012. Winter logging sale. Canopy spacing good. Landowner planted oak, Wild Apple, Pear Trees for wildlife. FIA

	<p>plot is on property. Vernal pools buffered. No issues.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. 16-017-2013 (155 acres) Aspen Regeneration in 2013. Stand is well stocked. Grouse habitat created. Discussed monitoring of regeneration. RMZ exceeds minimum requirements. Stream crossing has been removed and banks stabilized. No issues identified. 4. 16-056-2003 (158 acres) Aspen Regeneration 2013. Winter logging. Diversity with Aspen, scattered pine, Maple. Habitat created for grouse and wintering for deer. No issues identified. 5. 16-002-2004 (77 acres) Aspen Regeneration cut in 2008. RMZ exceeds minimum requirements. Crossing of RMZ removed and stabilized. Old field has been planted in clover for food plot. Chemicals have been used for weed control. No issues identified.
7 – June – 2016	
FMU/Location/ sites visited*	Activities/ notes
<p>Site visits</p>	<p>Ferrucci: Gordon, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16-008-2012 (240 acres) Completed Red Pine Thinning in two stands: Stand 12 was 14 acres, 63-year old plantation; Stand 13 a 3-acre natural stand. Most of the harvested logs were used for dimension lumber, but poles will be likely output next harvest. Results met harvest goals, leaving well-spaced, good quality trees with large crowns, no residual stem damage, rutting, or soil compaction noted. 2. 16-005-1997 (69 acres) Inspected Stand 2, a 25-acre stand which had a clear-cut with reserves completed in the summer of 2014. Reserved Red Oak, White Pine, Black Ash and Balsam Fir and cut trees larger than 2-inch diameter of all other species. Wetlands were buffered, no soil damage was observed, with good utilization, scattered, lopped tops, and no residual damage. The property has a good road system and several well-maintained food plots. 3. 16-002-2014 (40 acres) An 11-acre regeneration harvest was completed in 2014. Property is managed for wildlife and timber, and wildlife food plots with fenced fruit-trees scattered in them. Significant diversity of species, size, and ages of trees. There is an internal road and trail system, a camping and canoe launch area with a fire pit, and a cabin. 4. 16-008-1998 (80 acres) Recent harvest of 8 acres of Scrub Oak, completing partial harvests done years ago to conform with plan. Also reviewed three stands not recently treated to confirm that the current forest conditions are accurately depicted in the plans. Stand 6 is a 1990-origin Red Pine Plantation with some Scrub Oak competition; this stand is scheduled for its first thinning in 2020, a realistic prescription. Stand 12 is 1990 origin Scrub Oak, confirmed by observation. Stand 13 was thinned in 2005 removing scrub oak and marked Red Pine.

	<p>Meister: Brule, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16-002-199 (75 ac): 75 ac of clearcut with reserves to achieve aspen and oak regeneration; retention of snags, red maple, sugar maple, oak species, red pine, white pine and white spruce. Higher residual basal area than typical clearcut with reserve harvest according to logger. Spacing of retention consistent with seed-tree or shelterwood harvest. Excellent utilization due to multiple markets for harvested material, including biomass. Tops left onsite and run over with equipment. Logger interviewed is FISTA-trained and attends continuing education courses to maintain certification. Mostly logged under frozen conditions. Property boundaries flagged. A few vernal pools were observed that had some material removed from buffer zone, but saplings left. Two pools near property boundaries had large shade trees from adjacent stands. No evidence of equipment entry into vernal pools. Discussion with MFL staff on how cutting notices lead to updates to group member management plans in WisFRS. 2. Same owner, multiple MFL and FCL properties (note: FCL is outside of the scope of FSC and ATFS, though FCL cutting notice for 16-001-1968 was checked as a certified for an unharvested sale): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 16-023-2004 (40 ac): stand 2, 24 ac of aspen and jack pine regeneration harvest with retention of oak and red pine planned and unharvested. Jack pine is 62 years old and showing signs of significant decline. b. 16-016-1998 (75 ac): stand 5, 10 ac of aspen marked regeneration harvest with retention of oak species. Stand boundary well before the RMZ for the Brule River. Inspection of RMZ. Discussion on Non-timber Forest Product rules for MFL members. 3. 16-258-1999 (80 ac), 16-269-1999 (80 ac), and 16-270-1999 (80 ac) (three MFLs under a single family's ownership and management): Approx. 65 ac of aspen clearcut with reserves to regenerate aspen. Retention of red pine, white pine, oak species, and red maple spaced at seed-tree or shelterwood intervals, and clumps of sub-merchantable hardwoods retained where mature to overmature trees were lacking. Vernal pools protected with equipment exclusion and only large, merchantable aspen removed at the edges. Inspection of stand, property, and sale boundaries. Good use of slash to protect skid trails and well-distributed over site. Interview with procurement/ cooperating forester. Harvested material sold to pulp, bolt, and lumber markets; harvested volume to be divided between MFLs based on acreage. Spring-logged due to upland, sandy conditions that allow for quicker drainage. No use of chemicals. 4. Brule office: review of WisFRS to see how cutting notices are
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	<p>tracked (example: 16-028-2003), demonstration of updates to MFL plans after mandatory practice (example: 16-002-1999). Observation of DNR forester's personal post-harvest inspection form, which is usually only used on more complex harvests. Demonstration of how Natural Heritage Index functions using map and polygon query. Hits may include species or plant community occurrences.</p>
	<p>Watts: Pattison, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16-051-2005 (26 acres) Harvest planned for 2006 regeneration harvest of 24 acres. RMZ flagged on main stream and drains. RMZ exceeds minimum requirements. Due to small acreage and winter harvest the landowner has been unable to contract the sale. Documentation of letters, Notice of Investigation, and sale proposal witnessed. Process followed for not completing mandatory practices. No bids were received when bid 1/13/14. Consultant continues to try to sell timber. 2. 16-043-2004 (29 acres) Logger began cutting prior to approval of Cutting Notice for T&E species complete. Harvest area is within 300' buffer of Wagner Creek on adjacent property. Logger stopped. Area investigated for take. No issues identified. Buffer was increased in area. Line flagged for harvest area. Winter harvest. Minor rutting. No issues. 3. 16-026-2003 (78 acres) No mandatory activity required. Diversity in age classes of Aspen. No issues. 4. 16-009-2012 (41 acres) Mandatory practice in 2028 – Seed Tree Regeneration. Objective recreation, timber, syrup. No issues.
8 – June – 2016	
FMU/Location/ sites visited*	Activities/ notes
Site visits	<p>Ferrucci: Ellsworth, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 48-009-1992 (18 acres) Recently completed improvement harvest in a 50-year old, 18 acre northern hardwood stand. Interviewed owner of mil and procurement forester 2. 48-011-2015 (120 acres) Significant regeneration harvest was completed during interim period between MFL contracts. Harvested areas have ample natural regeneration, mostly Aspen, but also Red Oak stump sprouts. Wisconsin foresters will conduct post-harvest reconnaissance assessment and will revise the MFL plans as needed. Steep section of main skid trail has had more water bars installed and is mostly stabilized. 3. 48-003-2004 (11 acres) Stand 1 consists of 8 acres of northern hardwoods scheduled for treatment, but many efforts to sell the timber without success led to decision to reschedule for 2014 in association with harvest in 3 acres of Aspen. Most trees in booth stands are healthy and growing well. Interview of owner confirmed that his objectives are accurately represented in the plan and in the revised prescription. 4. 48-029-2013 (60 acres) Harvest completed in 2013 from Stand

	<p>1, a second-row thinning of a young Red Pine plantation, and Stand 3, a coppice regeneration treatment in Aspen.</p>
	<p>Meister: Barron, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Barron office: review of MFL group member records maintained onsite. Demonstration of use of county websites to find property ownership and tax information. No chemicals applied by group members sampled. 2. Two MFLs under one family, timber sales harvested together in 2014: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 03-015-2017 (27.5 ac): 7 ac of northern hardwood overstory removal to release primarily established sugar maple regeneration. Inspection of conifer and hardwood plantings in adjacent stand planted after fire two decades ago. Observation of water course buffers. b. 03-016-2017 (40 ac): 38 ac of northern hardwood sanitation-salvage and selection harvest; emphasis on removal of suppressed and defect trees with heavier removal of ash species. Inspection of water course buffer. Discussion of optional pre-harvest herbicide and scarification treatment to control stinging nettle and allow for establishment of advanced sugar maple regeneration for next entry, which did not occur. Next harvest entry in 15-20 years will likely emphasize group selection in order to establish more age classes. Interview with consulting forester. Feller-buncher and hand crew used. 3. 03-015-1994 (40 ac): 40 ac selection harvest in 2014 in northern hardwood stand. Retention of oak, maple, basswood, and other associated species. Winter-logged. Pulp and saw timber products sold. Next entry will emphasize gaps to release pockets of oak and maple. 4. 03-004-2007 (105 ac): Stands 1 (33 ac) and 2 (37 ac) to receive selection harvests in northern hardwood stands. Snags, yellow birch, basswood, white pine, and oak and maple species retained. Wildlife trees marked with a 'w'. Some gaps to be created to establish northern hardwood regeneration. Within single-tree selection areas, emphasis was on removal of suppressed and defect trees. Inspection of property boundaries. Stand 3 (16 ac) was a nearly complete aspen regeneration harvest with retention of oak and maple species. Excellent utilization due to use of mechanical harvester and good distribution of slash to control erosion and contribute to nutrient cycling. Interviews with group member and timber buyer. 5. 03-002-2004 (80 ac): Property posted. Northern hardwood group and single-tree selection planned to establish more age classes and release regeneration. Wetter site, so more red maple and basswood present. Aspen regeneration harvest will

	<p>occur on other areas where it is mature.</p> <p>6. Two MFLs under one family, timber sales to be harvested as one contiguous sale, 03-211-1997 (40 ac) and 03-022-1997 (26 ac): Northern hardwood selection harvest planned and marked with emphasis on removal of suppressed and defect trees, as well as ash due to pending potential impacts of emerald ash borer. Pulpwood is primary market, so lots of higher quality material will be left behind. Retention of oak and maple species. Inspection of water courses. Discussion of harvest timing. Interviews with timber buyers.</p> <p>7. 03-025-2015 (103 ac): Conifer thinning (red pine and white spruce) and aspen regeneration on 23 ac. Some hardwood removed from thinning areas. Buckthorn is well-established and is scheduled to receive control treatments when the conifers reach final harvest age in 30-40 years. Currently, control is too costly for any added benefit. Interview with consulting forester. Discussion with DNR staff on NHI compliance and timing of cutting notices.</p>
	<p>Watts: Barnes, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16-005-2006 (23 acres) Germann Road Fire in 2013. Salvage in 2013. Scrub oak chipped for biomass. Site prep of trench and chemical application. Containerized seedlings planted 2015. Good survival. Planted on contour. Great job of salvage and regeneration. 2. 16-003-2005 (69 acres) Germann Road Fire in 2013. Salvage in 2013. Buffer around lake. Site prep of disk, trench and chemical application. Containerized seedlings planted April, 2015. Good survival. Planting on contour. Survival check in year 1, 3, and 5. Great job of salvage and regeneration. County and DNR worked together. 3. 16-201-2004 (40 acres) Germann Road Fire in 2013. Salvage in 2013. Slash chipped for biomass. Pond buffered. Site prep of trench and chemical application. Containerized seedlings planted 2015. Various species planted for diversity – containerized Red Pine on slopes; Black Spruce in RMZ; Jack Pine on .6 acres for diversity. Good survival. Planted on contour. Great job of salvage and regeneration. 4. 16-012-2015 (79 acres) Marked thinning of Pine and Aspen prior to enrollment. No mandatory practices during 25 year plan. Buffer around pond. Good road system. No issues. 5. 16-013-2015 (53 acres) Marked thinning of Pine and Aspen prior to enrollment. No mandatory practices during 25 year plan. Good road system. No issues.
9 – June – 2016	
FMU/Location/ sites visited*	Activities/ notes
Site visits	<p>Ferrucci: Ellsworth, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 48-037-1992; 48-015-2017 (25 acres) Interviewed MFL Group Member, who confirmed that the plan reflects his objectives

	<p>and described the history of the conifer plantations. Stand 1 7 acres White Spruce – 2 Mandatory thinnings in next 25-year contract period in 2019 and 2032. Stand 2 18 acres Northern Hardwoods – Single-tree selection prescribed in 2019</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. 48-013-1996 (71 acres) MFL Group Members were interviewed and described goal of creating a forest for timber and pulp, which they have done through planting a mixture of white pine, ash, and red oak in alternate rows (Stand 1). The plantation has developed well but will require thinning, and there are challenges with markets as well as deciding how to treat the Ash component given the expected arrival of Emerald ash borer soon. Stand 2 had some Aspen cut in 1998 and is indicated for a selection harvest soon. Letters have been sent the past two years advising the owners of due (now overdue) practices in these two stands, but thus far the owners have been unable to sell these projects. A discussion of options ensued, indicating regular efforts by WDNR foresters to assist in such situations to attempt to avoid withdrawal process. 3. 48-022-1995 (58 acres) Reviewed northern hardwood Stand 1 that is being managed using the selection system. A consultant marked and set up a sale that was completed in 2004, with a planned mandatory selection harvest in 2018. Although some foresters are designating mandatory regeneration checks in WisFirs (database) following selection harvests this was not done here. Observed appropriate size gaps and reviewed regeneration in gaps and in lightly-thinned matrix. There are very few regeneration seedlings, and most that were found have been heavily and repeatedly browsed. Discussed monitoring, changes in the science program to increase emphasis on natural regeneration, and the development of County Deer Management Advisory Councils which are advising the Wildlife Bureau on deer goals. 4. 48-034-1993 (80 acres) Regeneration harvest in 4-acre Stand 4 completed in 2011. Aspen and some oak and hardwood trees have sprouted, along with significant numbers of Common Buckthorn. This stand had been part of a larger stand that had been incompletely harvested in 2006. During reconnaissance work in 2008 the Wisconsin DNR forester designated this harvest as a mandatory regeneration harvest, demonstrating effective monitoring and adaptive management in this case. 5. 48-012-1992 (43 acres) 1991 original plan, updates 2014. Reviewed small harvest in northern hardwood stand in rich site. Discussed gradual loss of oak component on such sites absent landowner willingness to implement heavy cutting. Reviewed entire file and confirmed that procedures were followed, comprehensive records are kept, and that the conclusions of no impact regarding initial “hits” in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Database search were appropriate.
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	<p>6. 48-206-1997 Active single tree and group selection harvest in a northern hardwood stand. Cutting notice by procurement forester and harvest by St. Croix Forestry using processor and forwarder. Substantial number of residual trees has been damaged during logging by removal of small to moderate-sized bark patches. Interviewed landowners but not logger or forester. Landowners confirmed that their objectives were consistent with the harvest.</p>
	<p>Meister: Barron, MFL order #s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Barron office: Review of staff training records and MFL group member files. 2. 03-010-2013 (76 ac): Single-tree and group selection to regenerate oak and aspen (25 ac) and red pine thinning (11 ac). Removal of suppressed and overmature trees in oak stand. Observation of lake buffer. Regeneration consists of little oak and mostly northern hardwood species. 3. 03-005-2015 (47 ac): 39 ac of oak thinning with heavy removal of ash, birch and aspen, and 2 ac of red pine thinning. Oak thinning area with evidence of vehicle trespass that has led to some rutting. There was also evidence of rutting from logging equipment. DNR forester has not conducted final recon on this sale, but possible actions within DNR’s authority include discussing the issue with the MFL group member to review possible avoidance measures in the future. Excellent retention of oak and northern hardwood species, evidence of oak regeneration in larger, scarified gaps. 4. 03-015-1993 (40 ac): 24 ac of single-tree and group selection to favor residual oak and regenerate oak and aspen. Buckthorn is present onsite. No current plans for control. Aspen regeneration should be able to compete with this invasive species. 5. 03-014-2002 (39 ac): 25 ac of northern hardwood thinning. Heavy removal of ash, ironwood, white birch and aspen, which has created some gaps to release existing regeneration or establish more where none was present. Higher quality residuals include oak, hickory, and maple species, as well as yellow birch and other northern hardwoods. Landowner hunts and runs a sugar bush onsite; some evidence of tractor rutting. 6. 03-019-2001 (154 ac): 74 ac of open MFL. 104 ac of oak thinning with some areas of overstory removal to release established regeneration. Removal of birch, aspen, and ash. Observation of small wetland meadows within thinning area; no evidence of equipment entry as it was winter-logged. 25 ac of tamarack seed-tree was then observed. Stand was harvested in winter to avoid negative impacts to swamp. Insect outbreak and age determined that a harvest was necessary to regenerate tamarack. Interview with procurement forester.
	<p>Watts: Barnes, MFL order #s:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 04-005-2016 (15 acres) Objective recreation and hunting. Shelterwood harvest with oak retained for seed source. Regeneration of oak and maple. Harvest timed to good acorn crop. Residual stand well protected. Scarify soil for oak regeneration. Slash used to stabilize slopes. Wet areas buffered. Pine retained along road and wet area for seeding. 2. 04-002-2006 (40 acres) Objective is recreation. Even aged management. Reserved island for legacy. Oak and White Pine retained for regeneration. Site scarified for oak regeneration. Access road seeded for stabilization. Buffer around cabin. 3. 04-053-2004 (39 acres) Unevenaged management. Winter harvest. Gap harvest with thinning. Removed high risk trees. Marked to remove and thin between. Maple target for regeneration. Coordinated with County to harvest along river. Trail used for buffer along bog. 4. 04--014-1992 (79 acres) Oak removal. Good oak regeneration. Harvesting coordinated during good acorn crop. Snags retained. Pockets of advanced regeneration protected. 5. 04-006-2013 (78 acres) Overstory removal and gap management. Regeneration of Sugar Maple and Oak. Site scarified for oak regeneration. Snags left for retention. Debris used to stabilize skid trails. Residual tree protected – minimal damage. Ironwood removed for invasive control.
10 – June – 2016	
FMU/Location/ sites visited*	Activities/ notes
<p>ATFS Central Office Review 7-10 am ATFS Closing Meeting will be 10 am (Baldwin office)</p>	<p>ATFS Closing Meeting Preparation: Auditor(s) take time to consolidate notes and confirm audit findings ATFS Closing Meeting and Review of Findings: Convene with all relevant staff to summarize audit findings, potential non-conformities and next steps</p>
<p>FSC Closing meeting (phone 2pm CST/3pm EST)</p>	<p>FSC Closing Meeting Preparation: Auditor(s) take time to consolidate notes and confirm audit findings FSC Closing Meeting and Review of Findings: Convene with all relevant staff to summarize audit findings, potential non-conformities and next steps</p>

2.2 Evaluation of Management Systems

SCS deploys interdisciplinary teams with expertise in forestry, social sciences, natural resource economics, and other relevant fields to assess an FME’s conformance to FSC standards and policies. Evaluation methods include document and record review, implementing sampling strategies to visit a broad number of forest cover and harvest prescription types, observation of implementation of management plans and policies in the field, and stakeholder analysis. When there is more than one team member, team members may review parts of the standards based on their background and expertise. On the final day of an evaluation, team members convene to deliberate the findings of the assessment jointly. This involves an analysis of all relevant field observations, stakeholder comments,

and reviewed documents and records. Where consensus between team members cannot be achieved due to lack of evidence, conflicting evidence or differences of interpretation of the standards, the team is instructed to report these in the certification decision section and/or in observations.

3. Changes in Management Practices

- A. The group membership has changed due to:
 1. Expired MFL orders that owners chose not to renew.
 2. MFL re-enrollments and new enrollments.
 3. Voluntary requests for removal from the certified group.
 4. Enforcement of group policies which resulted in removal from the certified group.
- B. No changes to products or species.
- C. There have been numerous DNR forestry staff changes due to retirements, new hires, promotions, and transfers.
- D. Of most significance this year are the recent changes to the Managed Forest Law, which are being reviewed by DNR staff in order to revise group membership policies and procedures that are consistent with the overall legal framework and certification requirements. The three most important changes are that DNR no longer needs to approve cutting notices if submitted by qualified professionals as described in the law and are consistent with the management plan, several natural resource professionals can fill out cutting notices as long as they have 5-years' of experience in any field described in the updated law, and MFL has changed from an opt-out to an opt-in program to take part in ATFS/FSC certifications.

The following records were reviewed in MFL and staff files:

- 2016 MFL internal audit;
- Training records (e.g., workshops, conferences, safety courses, etc.);
- Recently complete or active timber harvest planning and monitoring documentation;
- Complaints received;
- Accident records;
- Operational plan(s) for the next 12 months;
- Inventory records;
- Property and yield taxes, where applicable;
- Chemical use records (including quantitative data on the use of pesticides and any chemical use forms); and
- Records of sales of FSC certified products (copies of harvest summaries in Cutting Notice and Report for completed sales).

4. Results of the Evaluation

4.1 Existing Corrective Action Requests and Observations

Finding Number: 2015.1	
Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation	
FMU CAR/OBS issued to (when more than one FMU):	
Deadline	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input type="checkbox"/> Next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
FSC Indicator:	FSC-US FF 7.1.a.iii.
<p>Non-Conformity (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations): MFL 01-041-2014 was called a first stage oak shelterwood, but had mostly central hardwood crop trees (ash, elm, maple, white pine, and oak). There are several good reasons for selecting these crop trees, including the size of the tract (22 acres), the presence of invasive species within the stand and on adjacent properties, and that the more loamy soil texture may favor future conditions with greater central hardwood components. The name “first stage oak shelterwood,” however, may not give the group member a good idea of what to expect in this stand.</p> <p>Additionally in MFL 32-002-1993 an overstory removal was scheduled using the rationale of regenerating oak. While some oak seedlings were present in parts of the stand, other areas were lacking in advanced regeneration. Outside of any additional release or site preparation treatments, the stand will likely regenerate to central hardwoods with a small oak component. There is an opportunity to add clarity to silvicultural prescriptions to ensure landowners have realistic expectations on the density of oak regeneration.</p> <p>DNR is in the process of updating the silvicultural handbook and there may be an opportunity to clarify some terminology used.</p>	
<p>Corrective Action Request (or Observation): A written management plan should include the description of silvicultural and/or other management system, prescriptions, rationale, and typical harvest systems (if applicable) that will be used.</p>	
FME response (including any evidence submitted)	<p>The harvest unit in MFL #01-041-2014 consisted of a 13-acre shelterwood harvest in a red oak stand, and a 9-acre thinning in a 37-year old white pine stand. Typically, the first stage, or preparatory cut in a shelterwood is done when adequate regeneration is lacking. Successful regeneration from seed in any shelterwood is highly dependent on the seed crop following the initial cut. Field experience has often shown that in oak stands with other species present, the lighter-seeded species routinely regenerate first with oaks taking additional time to develop. In the first year after harvest, oaks may not be initially present in the density desired. As an on-going silvicultural mandatory practice, a stand examination in a few years needs to be done to plan for initiation of the second stage of the shelterwood. The regeneration level observed at that time will give a better indication of the oak density and the future stand composition.</p> <p>The oak harvest unit in MFL #32-002-1993 consisted of a 34-acre stand typed as oak within the management plan. The management plan and subsequent prescription followed DNR stand typing guidelines as the land exam data indicated a total stand BA of 90 sq.ft. with greater than 50% in oak species. Clearcutting oak with an expectation of regeneration by a combination of acorn germination plus coppice is an accepted silvicultural practice described in the DNR Silviculture Handbook. A full complement of</p>

	<p>oak regeneration is often not readily visible in the first year or two after harvest. The option does exist in MFL to require the landowner to plant additional seedlings if density levels don't meet MFL minimum medium levels as described in Ch. NR 46.02 (24m), Wis. Admin Code.</p> <p>The Department recognizes that more precise descriptions of planned treatments, especially with regeneration harvests as described can benefit landowners and foresters that monitor the results of treatments. Brad Hutnik, Division of Forestry Silviculturist, related that this is an on-going challenge in both even-aged and uneven-aged systems. The Department will look for opportunities to include the issue in future silvicultural training, consultant forester training, or other communications. Based on the DNR's experience implementing the MFL program to date, the risk of landowner confusion is low. One factor that helps landowners have realistic expectations is the availability of DNR foresters to discuss management outcomes.</p>
SCS review	<p>MFL program staff focused more on communicating this issue with staff and cooperating foresters to ensure that they have discussions with MFL group members on possible outcomes of standard prescriptions, which may occasionally deviate from how they are described in the silvicultural handbook. DNR sees no reason to include any other general options in the manual at this time.</p> <p>Cutting notices reviewed in the 2016 audit overall included more information on what species were harvested and retained. Stewardship plans reviewed included information on stand objectives and possible options in case certain species were difficult to regenerate. Landowners interviewed stated that harvest and regeneration expectations are reviewed with the procurement forester or timber buyer.</p>
Status of CAR:	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other decision (refer to description above)</i></p>

Finding Number: 2015.2	
Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation	
FMU CAR/OBS issued to (when more than one FMU):	
Deadline	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input type="checkbox"/> Next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
FSC Indicator:	FSC-US 7.3.a.
Non-Conformity (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations): On a marked timber sale on MFL Order #42-035-2003, the marking of green tree retention is not consistent with DNR guidelines (5-15% crown cover; <i>DNR Silviculture Handbook</i> and Appendix A of the <i>Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines</i>). As currently marked the residual stand will likely have an average of two trees per acre, which will not meet the minimum retention guidelines. During interviews with the forester responsible for the harvest, it was found that this person was not aware of the leave tree retention requirements of the MFL. The forester is not a certified plan writer or cooperating forester so he may not have had as much exposure to green tree retention guidelines.	
Corrective Action Request (or Observation): Workers should be qualified to properly implement the management plan; all forest workers should be provided with sufficient guidance and supervision to adequately implement their respective components of the plan.	
FME response (including any evidence submitted)	<p>WIDNR has had a long-term direct partner relationship with foresters participating in the Cooperating Forester Program, and the Certified Plan Writer Program which has included annual continuing education and forest tax law program update opportunities. Included as one of the opportunities directly related to silvicultural prescriptions and forest tax law cutting notice procedures is an on-line series of instructional training videos. All CPWs were required to view the series at initial roll-out in July 2014, and all Cooperating Foresters were strongly encouraged to view the series as well to help accomplish the goal of accuracy and consistency in cutting notice preparation and management prescriptions. The training series is still available for view on the DNR website at the following address: http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestLandowners/cuttingNotice/</p> <p>WIDNR does not have a separate outreach program for non-Cooperating Foresters and non-CPWs, so the primary opportunity to provide guidance to them on MFL management recommendations and cutting notice procedures is at the point of cutting notice review and approval by the reviewing DNR Field Forester, Team Leader, or Area Specialist.</p> <p>Additional training opportunities and program information are available. While primarily aimed at Cooperating Foresters, Certified Plan Writers, and DNR staff foresters, the training is open to other foresters, forest workers, landowners, et.al. The program information is targeted at any persons engaged private land management including landowner, foresters, logging professionals, et al. These training opportunities and program information include the following examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Cooperating Forester meetings, most recently held on April 5, 2016 in Rothschild, WI. • Annual MFL Update sessions. In 2015, the MFL Updates were done via two live

chat sessions where individuals called in questions and a panel of DNR experts answered the questions.

- The following DNR websites:
 - Continuing education opportunities
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestManagement/coopTraining.html>
 - MFL Certified Group information
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/TimberSales/mfl.html>
 - WI Forest Management Guidelines
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestManagement/guidelines.html>

In addition, there are locally available in-service trainings offered at different times of the year and in different districts/areas depending on need and availability. Some past examples include:

- NED Training held Nov. 11 & 12, 2015 in Langlade County. Subject was, “Assessment of Forest Stand Conditions: Collecting Better Data to Make Better Prescriptions.”
- Southern District training held Jan. 24, 2014 in Baraboo. Subject was, “Managing the Southern Forest (as in WI): Taking an even-aged stand to an all-aged stand, and can it be done?”

In 2015, changes were initiated in the MFL cutting notice review process (Please refer to the information included in this link

http://intranet.dnr.state.wi.us/int/land/forestry/Div_Overview/FR_Management/ftax/). Following review by an internal Cutting Notice Technical Team, and by an *ad hoc* Advisory team including external partners, decisions were implemented in July 2015 to allow broader flexibility in the cutting notice approval process. The Cutting Notice/Report form (2450-032) was revised to coincide with the cutting notice process change to include a check box in the signature section on page 1. The check box gives the MFL Landowner the choice of either having a DNR Forester review the cutting notice prior to approval, or entrusting the approval to a private-sector, non-DNR accredited forester. The DNR maintains a list of accredited foresters which are given this authority. The accreditation includes members of the Society of American Foresters (SAF), Wisconsin Consulting Foresters (WCF), and the national Association of Consulting Foresters (ACF).

The Department is sensitive to the issue of the correct implementation of guidance. In April 2016, Wisconsin Act 358 was signed into law. This new law makes numerous changes to the Managed Forest Law (MFL) which includes a broadening of the definition of cutting notice approval authority to include forestry workers without formal forestry education that can verify they have a minimum of five or more years of experience “engaged in the full-time profession of managing forests, including timber harvesting, wildlife management, water quality, and recreation to maintain a healthy and productive forest.”

Elements of the new law that affect the cutting notice process are being implemented with the new guidance developed. Additional training needs will be identified in the process, and should be developed as the new guidance becomes fully available.

WIDNR is also currently considering options for improving communication with MFL

	owners (i.e. group members) to help them understand their obligations for hiring contractors that are able to correctly implement the MFL.
SCS review	Due to the changes in the Managed Forest Law, effective communication, training and enforcement mechanisms are under review and this OBS is thus sustained. MFL staff have identified key areas to focus on in 2016-17 in an internal audit conducted in February 2016.
Status of CAR:	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Other decision (refer to description above)</i>

4.2 New Corrective Action Requests and Observations

Finding Number: 2016.1	
Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation	
FMU CAR/OBS issued to (when more than one FMU):	
Deadline	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input type="checkbox"/> Next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify): none
FSC Indicator:	FSC-US 1.1.a
Non-Conformity (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations): During interviews with DNR foresters that work with MFL group members, there is much confusion on what actions staff can take when group members' cutting notices are missing information or otherwise incomplete since DNR no longer has to approve or disapprove them when the review box remains unchecked. DNR approval is still required when the review box is checked. A FAQ was prepared and distributed to some staff (note: this is not dated) that mentions that concerns can be documented in the group members' files and communicated to the accredited forester. According to the updates to the law, an accredited forester may not necessarily be the administrator of an MFL cutting notice. It is also unclear to staff what actions staff can or should take in order for an MFL group member to avoid a potential enforcement action should one be discovered after the cutting notice is filed. For example, if NHI or archeological information was not reviewed by the cutting notice administrator and it was later discovered that these features were present, staff may need guidance on possible actions. FME has identified this issue during the 2016 internal audit of the MFL program, which justifies the grading as an OBS since the FME is already working on resolving this issue.	
Corrective Action Request (or Observation): To facilitate legal compliance, FME should ensure that employees, commensurate with their responsibilities, are duly informed about applicable laws and regulations.	
FME response (including any evidence submitted)	
SCS review	

Status of CAR:	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other decision (refer to description above)</i>
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Finding Number: 2016.2

Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation
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FMU CAR/OBS issued to (when more than one FMU):
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Deadline	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input type="checkbox"/> Next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify): none
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FSC Indicator:	FSC-US 6.3.h
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Non-Conformity (or Background/Justification in the case of Observations):
 In Pierce and Barron Counties, invasive species were observed on several group member FMUs (e.g., *Rhamnus* spp.). While some sites are infested, eradication efforts would be too costly at this time considering that the overstory will undergo final harvest 40-50 years from now. On other sites, however, invasive species are present at low levels in a few locations, so early detection and control may be possible in partnership with county-level cooperative weed management groups that are in the early stages of formation.

6.3.h The forest owner or manager should assess the risk of, prioritize, and, as warranted, develop and implement a strategy to prevent or control *invasive species*, including:

1. a method to determine the extent of invasive species and the degree of threat to native species and ecosystems;
2. implementation of management practices that minimize the risk of invasive establishment, growth, and spread;
3. eradication or control of established invasive populations when feasible: and,
4. monitoring of control measures and management practices to assess their effectiveness in preventing or controlling invasive species.

FME response <i>(including any evidence submitted)</i>	
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SCS review	
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Status of CAR:	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other decision (refer to description above)</i>
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Finding Number: 2016.3	
Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation	
FMU CAR/OBS issued to (when more than one FMU):	
Deadline	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input type="checkbox"/> Next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify): none
FSC Indicator:	FSC-US, FF 7.1.a.v
Non-Conformity (or Background/Justification in the case of Observations): While the chance of RSAs or HCVFs to occur on MFL properties is low, the person in charge of the RSA/HCVF assessment processes retired. Properties reviewed during the 2016 audit did not have RSAs or HCVFs as described in FSC-US guidance. However, FME should consider summarizing the results of these assessments in the overarching group management documents to ensure that they can be readily located for interested parties.	
Corrective Action Request (or Observation): A written management plan exists for the property or properties for which certification is being sought. The management plan should include a description of environmental assessment and safeguards based on the assessment, including approaches to protect representative samples of existing ecosystems (see Criterion 6.4) and management of High Conservation Value Forests (see Principle 9).	
FME response (including any evidence submitted)	
SCS review	
Status of CAR:	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)

Finding Number: 2016.4	
Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation	
FMU CAR/OBS issued to (when more than one FMU):	
Deadline	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input type="checkbox"/> Next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify): none
FSC Indicator:	FSC-US 7.3.a.
Non-Conformity (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations): Continuation of OBS 2015.2. Due to changes to the Managed Forest Law, mainly in allowing people with little to no accredited training or education to administer cutting notices (i.e., plan and manage timber harvests and other management practices), risk of improper or inconsistent implementation of the management plan has increased since DNR review and approval of cutting notices prior to harvest is no longer required on those cutting notices where the review box is unchecked. Now that a broad range of forestry, logging, wildlife, and recreation professionals with a minimum of five years' experience can fill out cutting notices, archaeological reviews (FF 3.3.a), timber harvest levels (FF 5.6.a), environmental impact assessments (6.1.a), NHI reviews (FF 6.2.a and FF 6.4.a), the management plan (FF 7.1.a), and other indicators that deal with harvest planning and implementation could be at risk. FME has identified this issue during the 2016 internal audit of the MFL program, which justifies the grading as an OBS since the FME is already working on resolving this issue.	
Corrective Action Request (or Observation): Workers should be qualified to properly implement the management plan; all forest workers should be provided with sufficient guidance and supervision to adequately implement their respective components of the plan.	
FME response <i>(including any evidence submitted)</i>	
SCS review	
Status of CAR:	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)

Finding Number: 2016.5	
Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation	
FMU CAR/OBS issued to (when more than one FMU):	
Deadline	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input type="checkbox"/> Next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify): none
FSC Indicator:	FSC-US 8.4.b
Non-Conformity (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations): In many cases, FME has access to regeneration monitoring information at the county and/or group member level. There may be an opportunity to use this information as part of an adaptive approach to meeting regeneration or stocking levels of desirable species where ungulate-browse pressure is high.	
Corrective Action Request (or Observation): Where monitoring indicates that management objectives and guidelines, including those necessary for conformance with this Standard, are not being met or if changing conditions indicate that a change in management strategy is necessary, the management plan, operational plans, and/or other plan implementation measures should be revised to ensure the objectives and guidelines will be met. If monitoring shows that the management objectives and guidelines themselves are not sufficient to ensure conformance with this Standard, then the objectives and guidelines should be modified.	
FME response <i>(including any evidence submitted)</i>	
SCS review	
Status of CAR:	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)

Finding Number: 2016.6	
Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation	
FMU CAR/OBS issued to (when more than one FMU):	
Deadline	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input type="checkbox"/> Next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify): none
FSC Indicator:	FSC-STD-30-005, 3.2 and 3.3
<p>Non-Conformity (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations): Due to changes to the Managed Forest Law, mainly in allowing people with little to no accredited training or education to administer cutting notices, the FME risks being able to maintain procedures that are sufficient to establish an efficient internal control system to ensure that all members are fulfilling applicable requirements.</p> <p>Since updates to the Managed Forest Law have allowed greater flexibility in allowing who can administer cutting notices, qualifications and training measures for involved personnel may need to be revised and updated.</p> <p>FME has identified this issue during the 2016 internal audit of the MFL program, which justifies the grading as an OBS since the FME is already working on resolving this issue.</p>	
<p>Corrective Action Request (or Observation): The Group entity's procedures should be sufficient to establish an efficient internal control system ensuring that all members are fulfilling applicable requirements.</p> <p>The Group entity should define the personnel responsible for each procedure together with the qualifications or training measures required for its implementation.</p>	
FME response <i>(including any evidence submitted)</i>	
SCS review	
Status of CAR:	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)

Finding Number: 2016.7	
Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation	
FMU CAR/OBS issued to (when more than one FMU):	
Deadline	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input type="checkbox"/> Next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify): none
FSC Indicator:	SCS COC indicators for FMEs, 2.1.
Non-Conformity (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations): Since the MFL and Forest Crop Law (FCL) lands share many of the same forms, an FCL property was marked as certified in the cutting notice (Order # 16-001-1998). The land manager in this case has lands enrolled in both programs. Since no harvest has occurred yet, there is still an opportunity to address this situation before it could result in a non-conformance.	
Corrective Action Request (or Observation): Products from the certified forest area should be identifiable as certified at the forest gate(s).	
FME response (including any evidence submitted)	
SCS review	
Status of CAR:	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)

5. Stakeholder Comments

In accordance with SCS protocols, consultation with key stakeholders is an integral component of the evaluation process. Stakeholder consultation takes place prior to, concurrent with, and following field evaluations. Distinct purposes of such consultation include:

- To solicit input from affected parties as to the strengths and weaknesses of the FME’s management, relative to the standard, and the nature of the interaction between the company and the surrounding communities.
- To solicit input on whether the forest management operation has consulted with stakeholders regarding identifying any high conservation value forests (HCVFs).

Principal stakeholder groups are identified based upon results from past evaluations, lists of stakeholders from the FME under evaluation, and additional stakeholder contacts from other sources (e.g., chair of the regional FSC working group). The following types of groups and individuals were determined to be principal stakeholders in this evaluation:

5.1 Stakeholder Groups Consulted

Group members	Consulting foresters and certified plan writers
Timber buyers	Procurement foresters

Stakeholder consultation activities are organized to give participants the opportunity to provide comments according to general categories of interest based on the three FSC chambers, as well as the SCS Interim Standard, if one was used. The table below summarizes the major comments received from stakeholders and the assessment team’s response. Where a stakeholder comment has triggered a subsequent investigation during the evaluation, the corresponding follow-up action and conclusions from SCS are noted below.

5.2 Summary of Stakeholder Comments and Responses from the Team, Where Applicable

<input type="checkbox"/> FME has not received any stakeholder comments from interested parties as a result of stakeholder outreach activities during this annual audit.	
Stakeholder comments	SCS Response
Economic concerns	
None received.	
Social concerns	
<p>I think that opening up the cooperating forester program to non-logging and non-forestry professionals is risky; wildlife and recreation professionals do not always understand how to prepare harvest prescriptions. There are a few bad apples that could get through.</p> <p>Now that we have to use service providers, the MFL group member usually has to pay fees to management plan writing. The consulting foresters and plan writers charge more. Before we could work with the DNR to write the plan at no cost. I like that DNR can review harvest areas before cutting. The tax benefits are key to the success of this program; I see no negative to being enrolled in MFL.</p> <p>The recent changes to the MFL program should make it more</p>	<p>SCS received diverse opinions on the impacts of the changes to tax policy in the MFL program, and in regards to the greater flexibility in the use of non-forestry/ non-logging professionals in plan writing and harvest administration. DNR is still developing policies and procedures in response to the updated law, but it is clear that some of the changes may affect how DNR can effectively implement communication and enforcement actions since more review of management activities happens during or after their implementation (as opposed to during planning). This may increase the amount of enforcement cases and/or increase the amount of training made available to cooperating service providers, both of which affect the costs of running the MFL program. Devising effective, low-cost administrative mechanisms to fit the updates to the program will be an important step in ensuring its long-term integrity, as MFL staff have confirmed during interviews. Refer to OBS 2016.1, 2016.4 and 2016.6.</p> <p>Of note, regardless of a given service provider’s opinion on the changes to MFL, most service providers interviewed have worked with DNR staff and MFL group members for a long time and overall good forestry practices were observed during the audit.</p>

<p>efficient, especially since the cutting notice does not require DNR review. I like getting the second opinion on the harvest plan sometimes, though. When it was required I appreciated that. Since the new requirements have been released, though, I have not elected to have DNR review our sales. The even lower tax burden incentivizes people to keep their land under forest rather than convert to agriculture or development.</p>	
<p>I've meet non-forestry/ non-logging professionals that could administer a harvest better than some people that have had degrees in forestry, so I think that opening up the program to other professionals is good. They may require a lot more training or oversight, though.</p>	
<p>The MFL program should require the use of forestry and/or logging professionals. There are people who will take advantage of loose rules to take advantage of landowners. There are bad practitioners who can now approve poor forest management practices. There are also a lot of areas on private lands that have been reforested using public money. The removal of the yield tax means that the public may not recover some of these expenses.</p>	
<p>Environmental concerns</p>	
<p>None received.</p>	

6. Certification Decision

<p>The certificate holder has demonstrated continued overall conformance to the applicable Forest Stewardship Council standards. The SCS annual audit team recommends that the certificate be sustained, subject to subsequent annual audits and the FME's response to any open CARs.</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Comments:

7. Changes in Certification Scope

Any changes in the scope of the certification since the previous audit are highlighted in **yellow** in the tables below.

Name and Contact Information

Organization name	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources		
Contact person	Mark Heyde		
Address	101 S. Webster St. , FR/4	Telephone	608-267-0565
	PO Box 7921	Fax	608-266-8576
	Madison, WI 53707-7921	e-mail	mark.heyde@wisconsin.gov
		Website	dnr.wi.gov

FSC Sales Information

<input type="checkbox"/> FSC Sales contact information same as above.			
FSC salesperson	Sabina Dhungana		
Address	101 S. Webster St. , FR/4	Telephone	(608) 261-0754
	PO Box 7921	Fax	(608) 266-8576
	Madison, WI 53707-7921	e-mail	sabina.dhungana@wisconsin.gov
		Website	dnr.wi.gov

Scope of Certificate

Certificate Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Single FMU	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple FMU
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group	
SLIMF (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Small SLIMF certificate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low intensity SLIMF certificate
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group SLIMF certificate	
# Group Members (if applicable)	38,474 as of January 2016	
Number of FMU's in scope of certificate	47,905 MFL parcels as of January 2016	
Geographic location of non-SLIMF FMU(s)	Latitude & Longitude:	
Forest zone	<input type="checkbox"/> Boreal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Temperate
	<input type="checkbox"/> Subtropical	<input type="checkbox"/> Tropical
Total forest area in scope of certificate which is:		Units: <input type="checkbox"/> ha or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ac
privately managed	2,595,177	
state managed		
community managed		
Number of FMUs in scope that are:		
less than 100 ha in area	47,654	100 - 1000 ha in area 251
1000 - 10 000 ha in area		more than 10 000 ha in area

Total forest area in scope of certificate which is included in FMUs that:		Units: <input type="checkbox"/> ha or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ac
are less than 100 ha in area	2,595,177	(<1,000 ha/ 10-2,471 ac)
are between 100 ha and 1000 ha in area		
meet the eligibility criteria as <i>low intensity</i> SLIMF FMUs	2,595,177	
Division of FMUs into manageable units:		
Managed Forest Law order numbers		

FSC Data Request

Production Forests

Timber Forest Products	Units: <input type="checkbox"/> ha or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ac
Total area of production forest (i.e. forest from which timber may be harvested)	2,557,177
Area of production forest classified as 'plantation'	0
Area of production forest regenerated primarily by replanting or by a combination of replanting and coppicing of the planted stems	170,050 (PR, SW and 2/3 PJ)
Area of production forest regenerated primarily by natural regeneration, or by a combination of natural regeneration and coppicing of the naturally regenerated stems	2,387,127
Silvicultural system(s)	Area under type of management
Even-aged management	
Clearcut (clearcut size range)	452,199 (A, OX, 1/3 PJ)
Shelterwood	619,049 (PW and O)
Other:	102,731 (BW and MR)
Uneven-aged management	
Individual tree selection	538,226 (NH)
Group selection	346,961 (BH, CH and SH)
Other:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (e.g. nursery, recreation area, windbreak, bamboo, silvo-pastoral system, agro-forestry system, etc.)	
The sustainable rate of harvest (usually Annual Allowable Harvest or AAH where available) of commercial timber (m3 of round wood)	Each land owner has their own harvest intervals based on inventory data.
Non-timber Forest Products (NTFPs)	
Area of forest protected from commercial harvesting of timber and managed primarily for the production of NTFPs or services	Owners may designate productive forest NTFPs not to exceed 20% of total acreage
Other areas managed for NTFPs or services	0
Approximate annual commercial production of non-timber forest products included in the scope of the certificate, by product type	We don't collect data on NTFPs on private lands.
Explanation of the assumptions and reference to the data source upon which AAH and NTFP harvest rates estimates are based:	
Aggregated AAH or NTFB Harvest Rate does not apply to SLIMFs. Harvest intervals are included in the	

Managed Forest Law Stewardship Plans which use property specific inventory data.	
Species in scope of joint FM/COC certificate: <i>Scientific/ Latin Name (Common/ Trade Name)</i>	
Species	Scientific Name
Aspen/Popple:	<i>Populus tremuloides</i> <i>Populus grandidentata</i>
Balsam poplar	<i>Populus balsamifera</i>
Bottomland hardwoods:	<i>Populus deltoides</i>
Eastern Cottonwood	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>
Swamp white oak	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>
Siver maple	<i>Ulmus americana</i>
American elm	<i>Betula nigra</i>
River birch	<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>
Green ash	
White birch	<i>Betula papyrifera</i>
Northern white cedar	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>
Central hardwoods:	<i>Quercus alba</i>
White oak	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>
Bur oak	<i>Quercus velutina</i>
Black oak	<i>Quercus ellipsoidalis</i>
Northern pin oak	<i>Juglans nigra</i>
Black walnut	<i>Juglans cinerea</i>
Butternut	<i>Carya ovata</i>
Shagbark hickory	<i>Carya cordiformis</i>
Bitternut hickory	<i>Prunus serotina</i>
Black cherry	<i>Acer rubrum</i>
Red maple	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>
Hackberry	
Balsam fir	<i>Abies balsamea</i>
Eastern hemlock	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>
Miscellaneous conifers:	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>
Scotch pine	<i>Larix decidua</i>
European larch	<i>Picea abies</i>
Norway spruce	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>
Eastern redcedar	<i>Picea pungens</i>
Blue spruce	

Miscellaneous deciduous:	
Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>
Boxelder	<i>Acer negundo</i>
	<i>Robinia</i>
Black locust	<i>pseudoacacia</i>
Honey locust	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>
Eastern Hophornbeam, Ironwood	<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>
Musclewood, Bluebeech	<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>
Northern hardwoods:	
Sugar maple	<i>Acer saccharum</i>
	<i>Betula</i>
Yellow birch	<i>alleghaniensis</i>
White ash	<i>Fraxinus americana</i>
American beech	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>
American basswood	<i>Tilia americana</i>
Northern red oak	<i>Quercus rubra</i>
Red Pine	<i>Pinus resinosa</i>
Jack Pine	<i>Pinus banksiana</i>
Eastern white pine	<i>Pinus strobus</i>
Black spruce	<i>Picea mariana</i>
Tamarack	<i>Larix laricina</i>
Black ash	<i>Fraxinus nigra</i>
White spruce	<i>Picea glauca</i>

FSC Product Classification

Timber products			
	Product Level 1	Product Level 2	Species
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	W1 Rough Wood	W1.1 Roundwood (logs)	Aspen/Popple, Balsam poplar, Eastern Cottonwood, Swamp white oak, Silver maple, American elm, River birch, Green ash, White birch, Northern white cedar, White oak, Bur oak, Black oak, Northern pin oak, Black walnut, Bitternut, Shagbark hickory, Bitternut hickory, Black cherry, Red maple, Hackberry, Balsam fir, Eastern hemlock, Scotch pine, European larch, Norway spruce, Eastern redcedar, Blue spruce, Norway maple, Boxelder, Black locust, Honey locust, Eastern Hophornbeam, Ironwood, Musclewood, Bluebeech, Sugar maple, Yellow birch, White ash, American beech, American basswood, Northern red oak, Red Pine, Jack Pine, Eastern white pine, Black spruce

			Tamarack, Black ash, White spruce
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		W1.2 Fuel Wood	Aspen/Popple, Balsam poplar, Eastern Cottonwood, Swamp white oak, Siver maple, American elm, River birch, Green ash, White birch, Northern white cedar, White oak, Bur oak Black oak, Northern pin oak, Black walnut, Butternut, Shagbark hickory, Bitternut hickory, Black cherry, Red maple, Hackberry, Balsam fir, Eastern hemlock, Scotch pine, European larch, Norway spruce, Eastern redcedar, Blue spruce, Norway maple, Boxelder, Black locust, Honey locust, Eastern Hophornbeam, Ironwood Musclewood, Bluebeech, Sugar maple, Yellow birch, White ash, American beech, American basswood, Northern red oak, Red Pine Jack Pine, Eastern white pine, Black spruce Tamarack, Black ash, White spruce
<input type="checkbox"/>		W1.3 Twigs	
<input type="checkbox"/>	W2 Wood charcoal		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	W3 Wood in chips or particles	W3.1 Wood chips	Aspen/Popple, Balsam poplar, Eastern Cottonwood, Swamp white oak, Siver maple, American elm, River birch, Green ash, White birch, Northern white cedar, White oak, Bur oak Black oak, Northern pin oak, Black walnut, Butternut, Shagbark hickory, Bitternut hickory, Black cherry, Red maple, Hackberry, Balsam fir, Eastern hemlock, Scotch pine, European larch, Norway spruce, Eastern redcedar, Blue spruce, Norway maple, Boxelder, Black locust, Honey locust, Eastern Hophornbeam, Ironwood Musclewood, Bluebeech, Sugar maple, Yellow birch, White ash, American beech, American basswood, Northern red oak, Red Pine Jack Pine, Eastern white pine, Black spruce Tamarack, Black ash, White spruce
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other*	Please List:	
Note: If your operation produces processed wood products such as wood pellets, planks, beams, poles etc. please discuss with SCS staff as you may need a separate CoC certificate.			

Non-Timber Forest Products			
	Product Level 1	Product Level 2	Product Level 3 and Species
<input type="checkbox"/>	N6 Plants and parts of plants	N6.1 Flowers	
<input type="checkbox"/>		N6.2 Grasses, ferns, mosses and lichens	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		N6.3 Whole trees or plants	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N6.3.1 Christmas trees
<input type="checkbox"/>		N6.4 Pine cones	

Conservation Areas

Total area of forest and non-forest land protected from commercial harvesting of timber and managed primarily for conservation objectives		HCVF are not designated on private lands, however animals, plants, and habitats of significance are identified through the Natural Heritage Inventory database. This information is used to craft the stewardship plan and design harvesting operations that mitigate disruptions to these elements.		
High Conservation Value Forest/ Areas				
High Conservation Values present and respective areas:				Units: <input type="checkbox"/> ha or <input type="checkbox"/> ac
	Code	HCV Type	Description & Location	Area
<input type="checkbox"/>	HCV1	Forests or areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia).		
<input type="checkbox"/>	HCV2	Forests or areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	HCV3	Forests or areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	HCV4	Forests or areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g. watershed protection, erosion control).		
<input type="checkbox"/>	HCV5	Forests or areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g. subsistence, health).		
<input type="checkbox"/>	HCV6	Forests or areas critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).		
Total Area of forest classified as 'High Conservation Value Forest/ Area'				0

Areas Outside of the Scope of Certification (Partial Certification and Excision)

<input type="checkbox"/> N/A – All forestland owned or managed by the applicant is included in the scope.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant owns and/or manages other FMUs not under evaluation.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicant wishes to excise portions of the FMU(s) under evaluation from the scope of certification.		
Explanation for exclusion of FMUs and/or excision:	Forest owners establish and manage small (generally less than 1 acre ea.) wildlife food plots from time to time. Although DNR recommends that landowners do not plant GMO corn and soybeans (eg. Roundup Ready®) as wildlife food sources this has been very difficult to track and control. Therefore based on the frequency of food plots found during the 2013 audit the following formula was developed to estimate the total number and area of food plots in the FMUs: number of MFL orders X .082 x 1 ac = number of acres excised; the calculation for 2016 is: 47,905 x .082 x 1 ac = 3928.2 ac	
Control measures to prevent mixing of certified and non-certified product (C8.3):	Food plots are not a source of forest products. There is no risk of mixing certified and non-certified products.	
Description of FMUs excluded from or forested area excised from the scope of certification:		
Name of FMU or Stand	Location (city, state, country)	Size (<input type="checkbox"/> ha or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ac)
Various	Not mapped unless at least 2 ac.	3928

8. Annual Data Update

8.1 Social Information

Number of forest workers (including contractors) working in forest within scope of certificate (differentiated by gender):		
# of male workers - DNR division of forestry: 304 permanent; 417 Limited-term	# of female workers - DNR division of forestry: 88 permanent; 143 Limited-term	
Number of accidents in forest work since last audit:	Serious: 8*	Fatal: 0

*2 lost time accidents and 6 with restricted duty

8.2 Annual Summary of Pesticide and Other Chemical Use

<input type="checkbox"/> FME does not use pesticides.				
Commercial name of pesticide / herbicide	Active ingredient	Quantity applied annually (kg or lbs)	Size of area treated during previous year	Reason for use
Roundup	Glyphosate		156 acres	Release regeneration and invasive

				plant control
Escort	Metsulfuron Methyl		50 acres	Invasive plant control
Oust	Sulfometuron Methyl		37 acres	Release regeneration and invasive plant control
Element 4; Garlon	Triclopyr		777 acres	Release regeneration and invasive plant control
Crossbow	2,4-D (CAS# 1929-73-3)		18 acres	Invasive plant control
Low Vol 4 Ester Weed Killer	2,4-D (CAS# 1928-43-4)		33 acres	
Unknown	Borax (Borax formulations approved for HRD prevention are not on the FSC HHP list.		48 acres	Heterobasidion Root Disease prevention; cut stump treatment.
Tordon RTU	Picloram (CAS# 6753-47-5) 2,4-D (CAS# 18584-79-7)		46 acres	Invasive plant control

SECTION B – APPENDICES (CONFIDENTIAL)

Appendix 1 – List of FMUs Selected For Evaluation

- FME consists of a single FMU
 FME consists of multiple FMUs or is a Group

SCS staff establishes the design and level of sampling prior to each group or multiple FMU evaluation according to FSC-STD-20-007. A list of the FMUs sampled and the rationale behind their selection is listed below.

- The RMU for this audit is set at the office level for this group certificate, which is a change from past sampling based on the county-level (72 counties vs. ~100 offices). All individual properties in the group qualify as a SLIMF and natural/ semi-natural management.

FMU Name	FMU Size Category: - SLIMF - non-SLIMF - Large > 10,000 ha	Forest Type: - Plantation - Natural Forest	Rationale for Selection: - Random Sample - Stakeholder issue - Ease of access - Other – please describe
Barnes RMU	SLIMF	Natural	Random sample
Barron RMU	SLIMF	Natural	Random sample
Brule RMU	SLIMF	Natural	Ease of access
Ellsworth RMU	SLIMF	Natural	Random sample
Gordon RMU	SLIMF	Natural	Ease of access
Pattison RMU	SLIMF	Natural	Ease of access

Appendix 2 – List of Stakeholders Consulted

List of FME Staff Consulted

Crow, Gerald R - DNR <Gerald.Crow@wisconsin.gov>;
 Heyde, Mark A - DNR <Mark.Heyde@wisconsin.gov>;
 Fouks, Rodney J-DNR Rodney.Fouks@wisconsin.gov
 Johnson, Bradley D-DNR Bradleyd.johnson@wisconsin.gov
 Steve Runstrom steven.runstrom@wi.gov
 Cain, Janette – DNR, janette.cain@wisconsin.gov

List of other Stakeholders Consulted

Name	Organization	Contact Information	Consultation method	Requests Cert. Notf.
Melvin Pearson	MFL group member	thepearsons@charter.net	Field	Y
Ed Ballman	MFL landowner representative	218-879-3841	Field	Y (Contact his son, David: 605-213-0190)

Justin Holmes	Verso Paper	justin.holmes@versoco.com	Field	Y
Mike Santikko	Santikko Logging	mikesantikko99@yahoo.com	Field	Y
Robert Huray	FutureWood	rhuray@futurewood.com	Field	Y
Dennis Waterman	Waterman Forestry, LLC	waterdj@chibardun.net	Field	Y
Bryan Brunner	Schmitt Timber Corporation	715-928-2072	Field	Y
Jake Wickham	Verso Paper	jacob.wickman@versoco.com	Field	Y
Geoff Morris	Verso Paper	Geoff.morris@versoco.com	Field	Y
Ron Hemauer	MFL group member	r.hemauer@comcast.net	Field	Y
Ross Langham	FutureWood	rlangham@futurewood.com	Field	Y
Mark Tomczak	MFL group member	Superior, WI	Field	Y
Jack Lundberg	Foreman, Max Erickson Logging	Poplar, WI	Field	Y
Kenneth Lundberg	MFL group member	Poplar, WI	Field	Y
Mike Pearson	Forester, Future Forest	Superior, WI	Field	Y
Jeff Dendeleone	Foreman, Max Erickson Logging		Field	Y
Dick Hentschel	MFL group member	Fennimore, WI	Field	Y
Chris Burke	Forester, FutureWood Corp		Field	Y
Bob Bee	Bee Forest Products		Field	Y
Toby Tulip	Bee Forest Products		Field	Y
Brad Pearce	Kris Rasmussen Logging		Field	Y
Kris Rasmussen	Kris Rasmussen Logging		Field	Y
David Ludzack	MFL group member	Cable, WI	Field	Y
Brad	Bow Tie Enterprises		Field	Y
Chris Burke	FutureWood		Field	Y

Brady	Plan Writer/Co-Operating Forester		Field	Y
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Appendix 3 – Additional Audit Techniques Employed

No additional audit techniques were employed.

Appendix 4 – Pesticide Derogations

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are no active pesticide derogations for this FME.

Appendix 5 – Detailed Observations

Evaluation Year	FSC P&C Reviewed
2013	All – (Re)certification Evaluation
2014	2.1, 2.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2, 6.3, 6.5, 6.7, 6.8, 6.9, 7.2, 7.3, 8.3 (COC indicators for FMEs).
2015	2.3, P3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.10, 7.4, and 8.5.
2016	5.6, 6.1, 6.4, 6.6, 7.1, 8.1, 8.4, and P9.
2017	P1, 5.1, 8.2 and FSC-STD-30-005 (projected).

C= Conformance with Criterion or Indicator
 NC= Nonconformance with Criterion or Indicator
 NA = Not Applicable
 NE = Not Evaluated

FSC Forest Management Standard (v1.0)—United States

REQUIREMENT	C/NC	COMMENT/CAR
Principle #1: Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.		
1.1 Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements.	NE	
1.1.a Forest management plans and operations demonstrate compliance with all applicable federal, state, county, municipal, and tribal laws, and administrative requirements (e.g., regulations). Violations, outstanding complaints or investigations are provided to the Certifying Body (CB) during the annual audit.	NE	
1.1.b To facilitate legal compliance, the forest owner	C	See OBS 2016.1 .

or <i>manager</i> ensures that employees and contractors, commensurate with their responsibilities, are duly informed about applicable laws and regulations.		
1.2. All applicable and legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges shall be paid.	NE	
1.3. In signatory countries, the provisions of all binding international agreements such as CITES, ILO Conventions, ITTA, and Convention on Biological Diversity, shall be respected.	NE	
1.4. Conflicts between laws, regulations and the FSC Principles and Criteria shall be evaluated for the purposes of certification, on a case by case basis, by the certifiers and the involved or affected parties.	NE	
1.5. Forest management areas should be protected from illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorized activities.	NE	
1.6. Forest managers shall demonstrate a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria.	NE	
Principle #2: Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.		
Principle #3: The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.		
Principle #4: Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.		
Principle #5: Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.		
5.1. Forest management should strive toward economic viability, while taking into account the full environmental, social, and operational costs of production, and ensuring the investments necessary to maintain the ecological productivity of the forest.	NE	
5.2. Forest management and marketing operations should encourage the optimal use and local processing of the forest's diversity of products.	NE	
5.3. Forest management should minimize waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources.	NE	
5.4. Forest management should strive to strengthen and diversify the local economy, avoiding dependence on a single forest product.	NE	

<p>5.5. Forest management operations shall recognize, maintain, and, where appropriate, enhance the value of forest services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>5.6. The rate of harvest of forest products shall not exceed levels which can be permanently sustained.</p>	<p>C</p>	
<p>5.6.a In FMUs where products are being harvested, the landowner or manager calculates the sustained yield harvest level for each sustained yield planning unit, and provides clear rationale for determining the size and layout of the planning unit. The sustained yield harvest level calculation is documented in the Management Plan.</p> <p>The sustained yield harvest level calculation for each planning unit is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documented growth rates for particular sites, and/or acreage of forest types, age-classes and species distributions; • mortality and decay and other factors that affect net growth; • areas reserved from harvest or subject to harvest restrictions to meet other management goals; • silvicultural practices that will be employed on the FMU; • management objectives and desired future conditions. <p>The calculation is made by considering the effects of repeated prescribed harvests on the product/species and its ecosystem, as well as planned management treatments and projections of subsequent regrowth beyond single rotation and multiple re-entries.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>MFL only consists of SLIMF group members.</p>
<p>FF Indicator 5.6.a On family forests, a sustained yield harvest level analysis shall be completed. Data used in the analysis may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - regional growth data; - age-class and species distributions; - stocking rates required to meet management objectives; - ecological and legal constraints; - empirical growth and regeneration data; and, 	<p>C</p>	<p>On each MFL property, a land exam is conducted to determine current species composition, age classes, and stocking levels and use this information to classify stands. Volume, basal area, site index, and trees per acre are estimated for each stand. Soil information is included for each stand. The DNR or cooperating service provider will then use this information to create mandatory practices intended to meet harvest, growth, and regeneration objectives while taking into account constraints based on</p>

<p>- validated forest productivity models.</p>		<p>productivity, protected sites, and wildlife goals as described in the property-specific management plan. Prescriptions are frequently based on the DNR’s Silvicultural Handbook, which is updated frequently and based on validated forest productivity models throughout the state. Pre- and post-harvest timber cruises ensure that growth and regeneration assumptions are consistent validated forest productivity models.</p> <p>Harvest timing is estimated via projected growth data (based on growth and yield data from FIA and the State of Wisconsin) and only occurs if estimated volume is available for harvest. Because of this type of regulation system, there is no need for each individual small parcel in the MFL to have a sustained yield harvest level. Other DNR requirements such as BMPs, NHI searches, Ecological Landscape considerations, Invasive BMPs ensure ecological and legal constraints are factored into harvest levels for each property.</p>
<p>5.6.b Average annual harvest levels, over rolling periods of no more than 10 years, do not exceed the calculated sustained yield harvest level.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>MFL only consists of SLIMF group members.</p>
<p>FF Indicator 5.6.b. On family forests, harvest levels and rates do not exceed growth rates over successive harvests, contribute directly to achieving desired future conditions as defined in the forest management plans, and do not diminish the long term ecological integrity and productivity of the site.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>On MFL properties observed, regeneration harvests targeting aspen, oak, and pine are frequent in northern Wisconsin followed by pine thinnings. Through retention of larger trees for wildlife and future timber value while allowing for regeneration objectives to be completed, there is very low risk that harvest rates ever exceed growth rates. Pine thinnings may occur three-five times over the lifetime of a typical stand based on site productivity and current markets for harvested material. In most cases, pine stands are regenerated at the end of the rotation to start another cycle of thinnings.</p> <p>Regulation system implemented as described in 5.6.a ensures harvest levels are sustained over successive harvests.</p>
<p>5.6.c Rates and methods of timber harvest lead to achieving desired conditions, and improve or maintain health and quality across the FMU. Overstocked stands and stands that have been depleted or rendered to be below productive potential due to natural events, past management, or</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Several mature to overmature small aspen stands were visited in the 2016 assessment, which were planned for harvest in 2016-17. These were the only areas where a lack of a timely harvest could lead to a loss in yield, but DNR and MFL cooperating service providers are aware of some ways to make these sales more attractive to potential bidders. There</p>

<p>lack of management, are returned to desired stocking levels and composition at the earliest practicable time as justified in management objectives.</p>		<p>is still a sizeable window of time to address the health and stocking issues in these stands. All other timber types and stands visited were being harvested under silvicultural systems and rates that will result in sufficient regeneration of targeted species.</p>
<p>5.6.d For NTFPs, calculation of quantitative sustained yield harvest levels is required only in cases where products are harvested in significant commercial operations or where traditional or customary use rights may be impacted by such harvests. In other situations, the forest owner or manager utilizes available information, and new information that can be reasonably gathered, to set harvesting levels that will not result in a depletion of the non-timber growing stocks or other adverse effects to the forest ecosystem.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>There are no NTFPs harvested in significant or commercial quantities that would lead to significant impact on timber and other forest resources, as confirmed through interviews with MFL group members, DNR foresters, and other stakeholders.</p> <p>The most common NTFP that could affect timber production objectives is tapping for maple sugar resources. This is not practiced across the entire group and usually only on small parcels within a given MFL property, thus ensuring that impacts to timber production remain localized.</p>
<p>Principle #6: Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.</p>		
<p>6.1. Assessments of environmental impacts shall be completed -- appropriate to the scale, intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources -- and adequately integrated into management systems. Assessments shall include landscape level considerations as well as the impacts of on-site processing facilities. Environmental impacts shall be assessed prior to commencement of site-disturbing operations.</p>	<p>C</p>	
<p>6.1.a Using the results of <i>credible scientific analysis, best available information</i> (including relevant databases), and local knowledge and experience, an assessment of conditions on the FMU is completed and includes: 1) Forest community types and development, size class and/or successional stages, and associated <i>natural disturbance regimes</i>; 2) <i>Rare, Threatened and Endangered (RTE) species</i> and <i>rare ecological communities</i> (including plant communities); 3) Other habitats and species of management concern; 4) Water resources and associated riparian habitats</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Items 1-6 are addressed in each group member's FMP and the Cutting Notice & Report. Additionally, the land exam serves as the main information collecting step on stands and plant communities. Some landowner files contain NRCS soil information and maps as well. Maps prepared include rough sketches of water features.</p> <p>While FMPs mention historic conditions, more specific information is available on the history of forests and forestry in the state from manuals and other resources from Wisconsin DNR, which are referenced in FMPs and made available to group members.</p>

<p>and hydrologic functions; 5) Soil resources; and 6) Historic conditions on the FMU related to forest community types and development, size class and/or successional stages, and a broad comparison of historic and current conditions.</p>		
<p>6.1.b Prior to commencing site-disturbing activities, the forest owner or manager assesses and documents the potential short and long-term impacts of planned management activities on elements 1-5 listed in Criterion 6.1.a.</p> <p>The assessment must incorporate the best available information, drawing from scientific literature and experts. The impact assessment will at minimum include identifying resources that may be impacted by management (e.g., streams, habitats of management concern, soil nutrients). Additional detail (i.e., detailed description or quantification of impacts) will vary depending on the uniqueness of the resource, potential risks, and steps that will be taken to avoid and minimize risks.</p>	C	All elements are reviewed during preparation of the FMP and, when a planned management activity is scheduled, documented on the Cutting Notice & Report.
<p>6.1.c Using the findings of the impact assessment (Indicator 6.1.b), management approaches and field prescriptions are developed and implemented that: 1) avoid or minimize negative short-term and long-term impacts; and, 2) maintain and/or enhance the long-term ecological viability of the forest.</p>	C	For each stand identified in a given group member’s FMP, there are mandatory and optional practices developed that take into account environmental constraints and potential negative impacts while accomplishing objectives related to timber production, wildlife, and water resources. When a harvest is finally scheduled, modifications to planned practices may occur prior that are consistent with this indicator.
<p>6.1.d On public lands, assessments developed in Indicator 6.1.a and management approaches developed in Indicator 6.1.c are made available to the public in draft form for review and comment prior to finalization. Final assessments are also made available.</p>	NA	MFL does not contain any public lands.
<p>6.2 Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas). Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of</p>	NE	

<p>forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. Inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping, and collecting shall be controlled.</p>		
<p>6.3. Ecological functions and values shall be maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including: a) Forest regeneration and succession. b) Genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity. c) Natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.</p>	NE	
<p>6.3.a.1 The forest owner or manager maintains, enhances, and/or restores under-represented successional stages in the FMU that would naturally occur on the types of sites found on the FMU. Where old growth of different community types that would naturally occur on the forest are under-represented in the landscape relative to natural conditions, a portion of the forest is managed to enhance and/or restore old growth characteristics.</p>	NE	
<p>6.3.a.2 When a rare ecological community is present, modifications are made in both the management plan and its implementation in order to maintain, restore or enhance the viability of the community. Based on the vulnerability of the existing community, conservation zones and/or protected areas are established where warranted.</p>		
<p>6.3.a.3 When they are present, management maintains the area, structure, composition, and processes of all Type 1 and Type 2 old growth. Type 1 and 2 old growth are also protected and buffered as necessary with conservation zones, unless an alternative plan is developed that provides greater overall protection of old growth values.</p> <p>Type 1 Old Growth is protected from harvesting and road construction. Type 1 old growth is also protected from other timber management activities, except as needed to maintain the ecological values associated with the stand, including old growth attributes (e.g., remove exotic species, conduct controlled burning, and thinning from below in dry forest types when and where restoration is appropriate).</p>	NE	

<p>Type 2 Old Growth is protected from harvesting to the extent necessary to maintain the area, structures, and functions of the stand. Timber harvest in Type 2 old growth must maintain old growth structures, functions, and components including individual trees that function as refugia (see Indicator 6.3.g).</p> <p>On public lands, old growth is protected from harvesting, as well as from other timber management activities, except if needed to maintain the values associated with the stand (e.g., remove exotic species, conduct controlled burning, and thinning from below in forest types when and where restoration is appropriate).</p> <p>On American Indian lands, timber harvest may be permitted in Type 1 and Type 2 old growth in recognition of their sovereignty and unique ownership. Timber harvest is permitted in situations where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Old growth forests comprise a significant portion of the tribal ownership. 2. A history of forest stewardship by the tribe exists. 3. High Conservation Value Forest attributes are maintained. 4. Old-growth structures are maintained. 5. Conservation zones representative of old growth stands are established. 6. Landscape level considerations are addressed. 7. Rare species are protected. 		
<p>6.3.b To the extent feasible within the size of the ownership, particularly on larger ownerships (generally tens of thousands or more acres), management maintains, enhances, or restores habitat conditions suitable for well-distributed populations of animal species that are characteristic of forest ecosystems within the landscape.</p>	NE	
<p>6.3.c Management maintains, enhances and/or restores the plant and wildlife habitat of Riparian Management Zones (RMZs) to provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) habitat for aquatic species that breed in 	NE	

<p>surrounding uplands;</p> <p>b) habitat for predominantly terrestrial species that breed in adjacent aquatic habitats;</p> <p>c) habitat for species that use riparian areas for feeding, cover, and travel;</p> <p>d) habitat for plant species associated with riparian areas; and,</p> <p>e) stream shading and inputs of wood and leaf litter into the adjacent aquatic ecosystem.</p>		
<p>Stand-scale Indicators</p> <p>6.3.d Management practices maintain or enhance plant species composition, distribution and frequency of occurrence similar to those that would naturally occur on the site.</p>	NE	
<p>6.3.e When planting is required, a local source of known provenance is used when available and when the local source is equivalent in terms of quality, price and productivity. The use of non-local sources shall be justified, such as in situations where other management objectives (e.g. disease resistance or adapting to climate change) are best served by non-local sources. Native species suited to the site are normally selected for regeneration.</p>	NE	
<p>6.3.f Management maintains, enhances, or restores habitat components and associated stand structures, in abundance and distribution that could be expected from naturally occurring processes. These components include:</p> <p>a) large live trees, live trees with decay or declining health, snags, and well-distributed coarse down and dead woody material. Legacy trees where present are not harvested; and</p> <p>b) vertical and horizontal complexity.</p> <p>Trees selected for retention are generally representative of the dominant species found on the site.</p>	NE	
<p>6.3.g.1 In the Southeast, Appalachia, Ozark-Ouachita, Mississippi Alluvial Valley, and Pacific Coast Regions, when even-aged systems are employed, and during salvage harvests, live trees and other native vegetation are retained within the harvest unit as</p>	NE	

<p>described in Appendix C for the applicable region.</p> <p>In the Lake States Northeast, Rocky Mountain and Southwest Regions, when even-aged silvicultural systems are employed, and during salvage harvests, live trees and other native vegetation are retained within the harvest unit in a proportion and configuration that is consistent with the characteristic natural disturbance regime unless retention at a lower level is necessary for the purposes of restoration or rehabilitation. See Appendix C for additional regional requirements and guidance.</p>		
<p>6.3.g.2 Under very limited situations, the landowner or manager has the option to develop a qualified plan to allow minor departure from the opening size limits described in Indicator 6.3.g.1. A qualified plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is developed by qualified experts in ecological and/or related fields (wildlife biology, hydrology, landscape ecology, forestry/silviculture). 2. Is based on the totality of the best available information including peer-reviewed science regarding natural disturbance regimes for the FMU. 3. Is spatially and temporally explicit and includes maps of proposed openings or areas. 4. Demonstrates that the variations will result in equal or greater benefit to wildlife, water quality, and other values compared to the normal opening size limits, including for sensitive and rare species. 5. Is reviewed by independent experts in wildlife biology, hydrology, and landscape ecology, to confirm the preceding findings. 	NE	
<p>6.3.h The forest owner or manager assesses the risk of, prioritizes, and, as warranted, develops and implements a strategy to prevent or control invasive species, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. a method to determine the extent of invasive species and the degree of threat to native species and ecosystems; 6. implementation of management practices that 	C	See OBS 2016.2.

<p>minimize the risk of invasive establishment, growth, and spread;</p> <p>7. eradication or control of established invasive populations when feasible: and,</p> <p>8. monitoring of control measures and management practices to assess their effectiveness in preventing or controlling invasive species.</p>		
<p>6.3.i In applicable situations, the forest owner or manager identifies and applies site-specific fuels management practices, based on: (1) natural fire regimes, (2) risk of wildfire, (3) potential economic losses, (4) public safety, and (5) applicable laws and regulations.</p>	NE	
<p>6.4. Representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape shall be protected in their natural state and recorded on maps, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations and the uniqueness of the affected resources.</p>	C	
<p>6.4.a The forest owner or manager documents the ecosystems that would naturally exist on the FMU, and assesses the adequacy of their representation and protection in the <i>landscape</i> (see Criterion 7.1). The assessment for medium and large forests include some or all of the following: a) GAP analyses; b) collaboration with state natural heritage programs and other public agencies; c) regional, landscape, and watershed planning efforts; d) collaboration with universities and/or local conservation groups.</p> <p>For an area that is not located on the FMU to qualify as a Representative Sample Area (RSA), it should be under permanent protection in its natural state.</p>	NA	FME only contains SLIMF FMUs.
<p>FF Indicator 6.4.a For family forests, the forest owner or manager documents the ecosystems that would naturally exist on the FMU, and assesses the adequacy of their representation and protection in the landscape (see Criterion 7.1). The consultation and assessment process may be more informal; however, on all FMUs, outstanding examples of common community types (e.g., common types with Natural Heritage viability rankings of A and B) are</p>	C	<p>A GAP analysis was completed and Wisconsin’s State Natural Area (SNA) program has documented locations of native ecosystems. Representative sites are adequately protected across the State through SNAs on public lands, including DNR- and Wisconsin County-managed, and on lands owned or managed by conservation organizations.</p> <p>If additional outstanding examples arise on MFL, these would be protected through the NHI process, which includes native plant communities. This was confirmed in interview with the</p>

<p>identified in the assessment to be protected or managed to maintain their conservation value.</p>		<p>group managers and local DNR foresters.</p>
<p>6.4.b Where existing areas within the landscape, but external to the FMU, are not of adequate protection, size, and configuration to serve as representative samples of existing ecosystems, forest owners or managers, whose properties are conducive to the establishment of such areas, designate ecologically viable RSAs to serve these purposes.</p> <p>Large FMUs are generally expected to establish RSAs of purpose 2 and 3 within the FMU.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>FME only contains SLIMF FMUs.</p>
<p>FF Indicator 6.4.b <i>Low risk of negative social or environmental impact. However, on all FMUs where outstanding examples of common community types exist (see Guidance for 6.4.a.), they should be protected or managed to maintain their conservation value.</i></p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Low risk because Criterion 6.4 is met on lands outside of the MFL program, as confirmed in interviews with FME managers and observation of maps showing SNAs.</p>
<p>6.4.c Management activities within RSAs are limited to low impact activities compatible with the protected RSA objectives, except under the following circumstances:</p> <p>a) harvesting activities only where they are necessary to restore or create conditions to meet the objectives of the protected RSA, or to mitigate conditions that interfere with achieving the RSA objectives; or</p> <p>b) road-building only where it is documented that it will contribute to minimizing the overall environmental impacts within the FMU and will not jeopardize the purpose for which the RSA was designated.</p>		
<p>6.4.d The RSA assessment (Indicator 6.4.a) shall be periodically reviewed and if necessary updated (at a minimum every 10 years) in order to determine if the need for RSAs has changed; the designation of RSAs (Indicator 6.4.b) is revised accordingly.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>If additional outstanding examples arise on MFL properties, these would be detected and protected through the NHI process that is updated at least annually. Confirmed through interviews with DNR foresters and MFL program staff, and observation of NHI database.</p>
<p>6.4.e Managers of large, contiguous public forests establish and maintain a network of representative protected areas sufficient in size to maintain species dependent on interior core habitats.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>No publicly managed FMUs are with the group.</p>

<p>6.5 Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to control erosion; minimize forest damage during harvesting, road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances; and to protect water resources.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>6.6. Management systems shall promote the development and adoption of environmentally friendly non-chemical methods of pest management and strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides. World Health Organization Type 1A and 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides; pesticides that are persistent, toxic or whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use; as well as any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited. If chemicals are used, proper equipment and training shall be provided to minimize health and environmental risks.</p>	<p>C</p>	
<p>6.6.a No products on the FSC list of Highly Hazardous Pesticides are used (see FSC-POL-30-001 EN FSC Pesticides policy 2005 and associated documents).</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>A review of the chemical list maintained by DNR of all group member applications reported demonstrates that no FSC HHP are used on areas within the scope of the certificate.</p>
<p>6.6.b All toxicants used to control pests and competing vegetation, including rodenticides, insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides are used only when and where non-chemical management practices are: a) not available; b) prohibitively expensive, taking into account overall environmental and social costs, risks and benefits; c) the only effective means for controlling invasive and exotic species; or d) result in less environmental damage than non-chemical alternatives (e.g., top soil disturbance, loss of soil litter and down wood debris). If chemicals are used, the forest owner or manager uses the least environmentally damaging formulation and application method practical.</p> <p>Written strategies are developed and implemented that justify the use of chemical pesticides. Whenever feasible, an eventual phase-out of chemical use is included in the strategy. The written strategy shall include an analysis of options for, and the effects of,</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>MFL only consists of SLIMF group members.</p>

<p>various chemical and non-chemical pest control strategies, with the goal of reducing or eliminating chemical use.</p>		
<p>FF Indicator 6.6.b All toxicants used to control pests and competing vegetation, including rodenticides, insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides are used only when and where non-chemical management practices are: a) not available; b) prohibitively expensive, taking into account overall environmental and social costs, risks and benefits; c) the only effective means for controlling invasive and exotic species; or d) result in less environmental damage than non-chemical alternatives (e.g., top soil disturbance, loss of soil litter and down wood debris). If chemicals are used, the forest owner or manager uses the least environmentally damaging formulation and application method practical.</p> <p>Written strategies are developed and implemented that justify the use of chemical pesticides. Family forest owners/managers may use brief and less technical written procedures for applying common over-the-counter products. Any observed misuse of these chemicals may be considered as violation of requirements in this Indicator. Whenever feasible, an eventual phase-out of chemical use is included in the strategy.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>MFL program has a demonstrated record of implementing non-chemical options whenever feasible. Evidence: http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/</p> <p>All chemical applications by landowners requires a Chemical Use Reporting Form to be completed: Evidence: http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/TimberSales/mfl.html http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/TimberSales/chemicalUse.html</p> <p>FSC’s highly hazardous pesticides are prohibited and least toxic chemicals (e.g., glyphosate) are generally the recommended choice.</p>
<p>6.6.c Chemicals and application methods are selected to minimize risk to non-target species and sites. When considering the choice between aerial and ground application, the forest owner or manager evaluates the comparative risk to non-target species and sites, the comparative risk of worker exposure, and the overall amount and type of chemicals required.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Application methods are typically done via backpack and the written prescription typically follows the label rate (unless justified at alternative rate). MSDS recommended safety procedures and equipment are required.</p>
<p>6.6.d Whenever chemicals are used, a written prescription is prepared that describes the site-specific hazards and environmental risks, and the precautions that workers will employ to avoid or minimize those hazards and risks, and includes a map of the treatment area.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>All chemical applications by landowners requires a Chemical Use Reporting Form to be completed: Evidence: http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/TimberSales/mfl.html http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/TimberSales/chemicalUse.html</p>

<p>Chemicals are applied only by workers who have received proper training in application methods and safety. They are made aware of the risks, wear proper safety equipment, and are trained to minimize environmental impacts on non-target species and sites.</p>		
<p>6.6.e If chemicals are used, the effects are monitored and the results are used for adaptive management. Records are kept of pest occurrences, control measures, and incidences of worker exposure to chemicals.</p>	C	<p>DNR presented chemical use records for the MFL group. Follow-up monitoring is done by Cooperating Foresters and/or MFL Foresters. Evidence: Interviews with MFL Foresters</p>
<p>6.7. Chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non-organic wastes including fuel and oil shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at off-site locations.</p>	NE	
<p>6.8. Use of biological control agents shall be documented, minimized, monitored, and strictly controlled in accordance with national laws and internationally accepted scientific protocols. Use of genetically modified organisms shall be prohibited.</p>	NE	
<p>6.9. The use of exotic species shall be carefully controlled and actively monitored to avoid adverse ecological impacts.</p>	NE	
<p>6.10. Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion: a) Entails a very limited portion of the forest management unit; and b) Does not occur on High Conservation Value Forest areas; and c) Will enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, long-term conservation benefits across the forest management unit.</p>	NE	
<p>Principle #7: A management plan -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations -- shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long-term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.</p>		
<p>7.1. The management plan and supporting documents shall provide: a. Management objectives. b) description of the forest resources to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands.</p>	C	

<p>b. Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories. d) Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection. e) Provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics. f) Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments. g) Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species.</p> <p>b) h) Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership.</p> <p>i) Description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.</p>		
<p>7.1.a The management plan identifies the ownership and legal status of the FMU and its resources, including rights held by the owner and rights held by others.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>MFL only consists of SLIMF group members.</p>
<p>FF Indicator 7.1.a A written management plan exists for the property or properties for which certification is being sought. The management plan includes the following components:</p> <p>i. Management objectives (ecological, silvicultural, social, and economic) and duration of the plan.</p> <p>ii. Quantitative and qualitative description of the forest resources to be managed, including at minimum stand-level descriptions of the land cover, including species and size/age class and referencing inventory information.</p> <p>iii. Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, prescriptions, rationale, and typical harvest systems (if applicable) that will be used.</p> <p>iv. Description of harvest limits (consistent with Criterion 5.6) and species selection. Also, description of the documentation considered from the options listed in Criterion 5.6 if the FMU does not have a calculated annual harvest rate.</p> <p>v. Description of environmental assessment and safeguards based on the assessment, including</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>MFL group member files contain several documents that comprise the FMP and address the items of this indicator, as verified at all field offices, including:</p> <p>Stewardship Forestry Plan (maps, objectives, quantitative and qualitative descriptions, silvicultural and other management systems, environmental assessment and safeguards, RTE species/ communities), Land exams, Cutting Notices & Reports, letters of communication from MFL staff, NRCS data (optional; e.g. soil maps), NHI database results, transfer order (if applicable), and deed & tax records.</p> <p>Stand descriptions include a qualitative and quantitative analysis of stand level data and information, including steps to achieve harvest, growth, and regeneration.</p> <p>Harvest limits can be monitored the state-level and county-level using Wisconsin DNR and US Forest Service data for the state.</p> <p>While the chance of RSAs or HCVFs to occur on MFL properties is low to none, the person in charge of the RSA/HCVF assessment processes retired. Properties reviewed</p>

<p>approaches to: (1) pest and weed management, (2) fire management, and (3) protection of riparian management zones; (4) protection of representative samples of existing ecosystems (see Criterion 6.4) and management of High Conservation Value Forests (see Principle 9).</p> <p>vi. Description of location and protection of rare, threatened, and endangered species and plant community types.</p> <p>vii. Description of procedures to monitor the forest, including forest growth and dynamics, and other components as outlined in Principle 8.</p> <p>viii. Maps represent property boundaries, use rights, land cover types, significant hydrologic features, roads, adjoining land use, and protected areas in a manner that clearly relates to the forest description and management prescriptions.</p>		<p>during the 2016 audit did not have RSAs or HCVPs as described in FSC-US guidance. However, FME should consider summarizing the results of these assessments in the overarching group management documents.</p> <p>See OBS 2016.3.</p>
<p>7.1.b The management plan describes the history of land use and past management, current forest types and associated development, size class and/or successional stages, and natural disturbance regimes that affect the FMU (see Indicator 6.1.a).</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>MFL only consists of SLIMF group members.</p>
<p>FF Indicator 7.1.b Actions undertaken on the FMU are consistent with the management plan and help to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the plan.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>All actions observed on group member properties in 2016 were consistent with descriptions in the FMP. Where changes were necessary due to stand conditions, addenda to the cutting notice or management plan were created.</p>
<p>7.2 The management plan shall be periodically revised to incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>7.3 Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plans.</p>	<p>C</p>	
<p>7.3.a Workers are qualified to properly implement the management plan; All forest workers are provided with sufficient guidance and supervision to adequately implement their respective components of the plan.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>See OBS 2016.4.</p>
<p>7.4 While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly</p>	<p>NE</p>	

<p>available a summary of the primary elements of the management plan, including those listed in Criterion 7.1.</p>		
<p>Principle #8: Monitoring shall be conducted -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management -- to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.</p>		
<p>8.1 The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be determined by the scale and intensity of forest management operations, as well as, the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment. Monitoring procedures should be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.</p>	<p>C</p>	
<p>8.1.a Consistent with the scale and intensity of management, the forest owner or manager develops and consistently implements a regular, comprehensive, and replicable written monitoring protocol.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>MFL only consists of SLIMF group members.</p>
<p>FF Indicator 8.1.a For Family Forests, the forest owner or manager develops and consistently implements a regular, comprehensive, and replicable written monitoring protocol. Monitoring may be scaled to the size and intensity of the management operations that affect the resources identified in C8.2.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Monitoring occurs during and after harvest, as confirmed during interviews with landowners, timber purchasers, and MFL staff. The Cutting Notice & Report contain pre-harvest estimations and post-harvest volumes reported.</p>
<p>8.2. Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor, at a minimum, the following indicators: a) yield of all forest products harvested, b) growth rates, regeneration, and condition of the forest, c) composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna, d) environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations, and e) cost, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>8.3 Documentation shall be provided by the forest manager to enable monitoring and certifying organizations to trace each forest product from its origin, a process known as the "chain of custody."</p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>8.4 The results of monitoring shall be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the management plan.</p>	<p>C</p>	
<p>8.4.a The forest owner or manager monitors and</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Management plan objectives are primarily monitored by DNR</p>

documents the degree to which the objectives stated in the management plan are being fulfilled, as well as significant deviations from the plan.		foresters following the completion of mandatory practices. Results are incorporated into revision and implementation of the plan, as observed through a demonstration of updated plans in WisFRS. Additionally, DNR's internal auditing of FSC conformance provides another opportunity to revise group management procedures and improve implementation.
8.4.b Where monitoring indicates that management objectives and guidelines, including those necessary for conformance with this Standard, are not being met or if changing conditions indicate that a change in management strategy is necessary, the management plan, operational plans, and/or other plan implementation measures are revised to ensure the objectives and guidelines will be met. If monitoring shows that the management objectives and guidelines themselves are not sufficient to ensure conformance with this Standard, then the objectives and guidelines are modified.	C	Interviews with field foresters and reviews of MFL property documents confirmed that monitoring is occurring and necessary revisions to plans are systematically implemented. In 2016, plans were updated after cutting notices and reports were finalized. Where stand conditions differed from descriptions provided in initial recon information, pre-harvest inventory information was used to justify the harvest prescriptions recorded on the cutting notice. See OBS 2016.5 .
8.5 While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring indicators, including those listed in Criterion 8.2.	NE	
<p>Principle #9: Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.</p> <p>High Conservation Value Forests are those that possess one or more of the following attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant: concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g., endemism, endangered species, refugia); and/or large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance b) Forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems c) Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g., watershed protection, erosion control) d) Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g., subsistence, health) and/or critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities). 		
9.1 Assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests will be completed, appropriate to scale and intensity of forest management.	C	
9.1.a The forest owner or manager identifies and maps the presence of High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF) within the FMU and, to the extent that data are available, adjacent to their FMU, in a	C	DNR's assessment for HCVF concluded that to-date no HCVF has been identified on MFL properties. The assessment is ongoing because conservation values are assessed on every property at the time of enrollment (plan writing) and prior to

<p>manner consistent with the assessment process, definitions, data sources, and other guidance described in Appendix F.</p> <p>Given the relative rarity of old growth forests in the contiguous United States, these areas are normally designated as HCVF, and all old growth must be managed in conformance with Indicator 6.3.a.3 and requirements for legacy trees in Indicator 6.3.f.</p>		<p>timber harvests. The ongoing assessments for HCVF are done through use of the NHI databases, using RTE species guidance (http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/nhi/wlist.html) use of WI DNR Ecological Landscapes http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/landscapes/, as well as observations made by DNR and cooperating service providers.</p>
<p>9.1.b In developing the assessment, the forest owner or manager consults with qualified specialists, independent experts, and local community members who may have knowledge of areas that meet the definition of HCVs.</p>	NA	MFL only consists of SLIMF group members.
<p>FF Indicator 9.1.b In developing the assessment, the forest owner or manager consults with databases, qualified experts, and/or best available research and literature.</p>	C	See 9.1.a.
<p>9.1.c A summary of the assessment results and management strategies (see Criterion 9.3) is included in the management plan summary that is made available to the public.</p>	C	All MFL group members' management plans are available upon request to the public. The HCVF assessment conducted at the state-level is available on the Wisconsin DNR's website.
<p>9.2 The consultative portion of the certification process must place emphasis on the identified conservation attributes, and options for the maintenance thereof.</p>	NA	
<p>9.2.a The forest owner or manager holds consultations with stakeholders and experts to confirm that proposed HCVF locations and their attributes have been accurately identified, and that appropriate options for the maintenance of their HCV attributes have been adopted.</p>	NA	To date, no HCVFs have been detected on MFL properties.
<p>9.2.b On public forests, a transparent and accessible public review of proposed HCV attributes and HCVF areas and management is carried out. Information from stakeholder consultations and other public review is integrated into HCVF descriptions, delineations and management.</p>	NA	MFL does not contain any public FMUs.
<p>9.3 The management plan shall include and implement specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the applicable conservation attributes consistent with the</p>	NA	

<p>precautionary approach. These measures shall be specifically included in the publicly available management plan summary.</p>		
<p>9.3.a The management plan and relevant operational plans describe the measures necessary to ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of all high conservation values present in all identified HCVF areas, including the precautions required to avoid risks or impacts to such values (see Principle 7). These measures are implemented.</p>	NA	To date, no HCVFs have been detected on MFL properties.
<p>9.3.b All management activities in HCVFs must maintain or enhance the high conservation values and the extent of the HCVF.</p>	NA	To date, no HCVFs have been detected on MFL properties.
<p>9.3.c If HCVF attributes cross ownership boundaries and where maintenance of the HCV attributes would be improved by coordinated management, then the forest owner or manager attempts to coordinate conservation efforts with adjacent landowners.</p>	NA	To date, no HCVFs have been detected on MFL properties.
<p>9.4 Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes.</p>	NA	
<p>9.4.a The forest owner or manager monitors, or participates in a program to annually monitor, the status of the specific HCV attributes, including the effectiveness of the measures employed for their maintenance or enhancement. The monitoring program is designed and implemented consistent with the requirements of Principle 8. FF Indicator: Low risk of negative social or environmental impact for private family forests. Public lands must follow the requirements in Indicator 9.4.a.</p>	NA	To date, no HCVFs have been detected on MFL properties.
<p>9.4.b When monitoring results indicate increasing risk to a specific HCV attribute, the forest owner/manager re-evaluates the measures taken to maintain or enhance that attribute, and adjusts the management measures in an effort to reverse the trend.</p>	NA	To date, no HCVFs have been detected on MFL properties.

FSC-STD-30-005 FSC Standard for Group Entities in Forest Management Groups

Requirement	C/NC	Comment/CAR
PART 1 QUALITY SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS		
C1 General Requirements	NE	
C2 Responsibilities	NE	
C3 Group entity's procedures	NE	
3.1 The Group entity shall establish, implement and maintain written procedures for Group membership covering all applicable requirements of this standard, according to scale and complexity of the group including:	NE	
3.2 The Group entity's procedures shall be sufficient to establish an efficient internal control system ensuring that all members are fulfilling applicable requirements.	C	See OBS 2016.6 .
3.3 The Group entity shall define the personnel responsible for each procedure together with the qualifications or training measures required for its implementation.	C	See OBS 2016.6 .
3.4 The Group entity or the certification body shall evaluate every applicant for membership of the Group and ensure that there are no major nonconformities with applicable requirements of the Forest Stewardship Standard, and with any additional requirements for membership of the Group, prior to being granted membership of the Group. <i>NOTE: for applicants complying with SLIMF eligibility criteria for size, the initial evaluation may be done through a desk audit.</i>	NE	
C4 Informed consent of Group members	NE	
C5 Group Records	NE	
PART 2 GROUP FEATURES		
C6 Group Size	NE	
C7 Multinational groups	NE	
PART 3 INTERNAL MONITORING		
C8 Monitoring requirements	NE	
C9 Sales of forest products and use of the FSC trademark	NE	

Appendix 6 – Chain of Custody Indicators for FMEs

Chain of Custody indicators were not evaluated during this annual audit.

SCS FSC Chain of Custody Indicators for Forest Management Enterprises: Version 5-1: 12/03/12

REQUIREMENT	C/ NC	COMMENT/CAR
1. Quality Management		

2. Product Control, Sales and Delivery		
2.1. Products from the certified forest area shall be identifiable as certified at the forest gate(s).	C	See OBS 2016.7.
2.2 The FME shall maintain records of quantities/volumes of FSC-certified product(s).	NE	
2.3. The FME shall ensure that all sales documents issued for outputs sold with FSC claims include the following information: a) name and contact details of the organization; b) name and address of the customer; c) date when the document was issued; d) description of the product; e) quantity of the products sold; f) the organization’s FSC Forest Management (FM/COC) or FSC Controlled Wood (CW/FM) code; g) clear indication of the FSC claim for each product item or the total products as follows: i. the claim “FSC 100%” for products from FSC 100% product groups; ii. the claim “FSC Controlled Wood” for products from FSC Controlled Wood product groups. h) If separate transport documents are issued, information sufficient to link the sales document and related transport documentation to each other.	NE	
2.4 The FME shall include the same information as required in 2.3 in the related delivery documentation, if the sales document (or copy of it) is not included with the shipment of the product. Note: 2.3 and 2.4 above are based on FSC-STD-40-004 V2-1 Clause 6.1.1 and 6.1.2	NE	

<p>2.5 When the FME has demonstrated it is not able to include the required FSC claim as specified above in 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 in sales and delivery documents due to space constraints, through an exception, SCS can approve the required information to be provided through supplementary evidence (e.g. supplementary letters, a link to the own company’s webpage with verifiable product information). This practice is only acceptable when SCS is satisfied that the supplementary method proposed by the FME complies with the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) There is no risk that the customer will misinterpret which products are or are not FSC certified in the document; b) The sales and delivery documents contain visible and understandable information so that the customer is aware that the full FSC claim is provided through supplementary evidence; c) In cases where the sales and delivery documents contain multiple products with different FSC Claims, a clear identification for each product shall be included to cross-reference it with the associated FSC claim provided in the supplementary evidence. <p><i>FSC-ADVICE-40-004-05</i></p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p>3. Labeling and Promotion</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
<p>4. Outsourcing</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
<p>5. Training and/or Communication Strategies</p>		

Appendix 7 – Group Management Program Members



Worksheet in
FM_FRM_AnADataUp