

Managed Forest Land and Forest Certification – What does joining the MFL certified group mean for me?

What is forest certification? Forest certification is an independent verification that woodland management conforms to standards for sustainability and best practices. In the context of forest certification, sustainability includes the ecological, economic, and social components of forests and surrounding communities.

How does joining the MFL certified group help me?

- Gives **assurance** that your woodland meets national and international standards for well-managed forests. Independent reviews of on-the-ground practices help you consider and practice the best possible management to help conserve woods and wildlife.
- Gives you the ability to sell timber in a **certified marketplace**. More and more wood-using industries are buying certified wood as proof to consumers that they are sourcing materials responsibly.
- You become a member of The American Tree Farm System® (ATFS), a program of the American Forest Foundation, your woodland is certified to the ATFS standards, and you are **eligible to display the Tree Farm sign**, see www.treefarmssystem.org.
- Woodlands are certified to the Forest Stewardship Council® **international standards** for well managed forests and chain of custody see www.us.fsc.org. License code FSC® C117792.

What are my responsibilities as a certified group member?

- Follow MFL program requirements.
- Understand and consider special certification requirements such as avoiding the use of genetically modified organisms (GMO), avoiding the use of highly hazardous pesticides, and giving special consideration to protecting threatened and endangered species. **Note:** *Roundup Ready® or other GMO seeds are allowed on wildlife food plots. Food plots have been removed from the certificate because of this issue.*
- If randomly chosen, agree to an independent review of conformance to certification standards. Commonly known as a certification audit, an assessment of conformance means comparing practices on the ground with certification standards.

Is membership voluntary? Yes, certified group membership is voluntary. Just check the box on your MFL application or on your MFL change of ownership form.

Does membership cost me anything? No. Group members do not have any extra costs for being in the MFL certified group. Audit costs and fees are paid by the DNR Division of Forestry.

Can I leave the MFL certified group? Yes, members can leave the certified group at no cost and it does not affect their status as a MFL owner. The number of times that a MFL owner can join, leave and re-join is subject to limitations.

For more information visit www.dnr.wi.gov and search forest certification.