



## Forest Certification Main Evaluation Report

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**for:**

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705-752-5430

**for the following certified forest area(s):<sup>1</sup>**

Nipissing Forest

**Date of report update: May 10 2012**  
**FSC Registration Code: QMI-FM\COC-001635**  
**Date of Certificate Issue: June 12, 2013**  
**Validity of the certificate: From (12/06/2013) to (11/06/2018)**

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of group certification, the certificate holder is the group manager and the region in which the group is located must be specified.

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SLIMFs –The element mark with an asterix (\*) in the table are not required in the case of certificates issued to single SLIMF FMUs but are required for all other certificates.

## 1.0 DESCRIPTION OF FOREST MANAGEMENT

### 1.1 Basic Quantitative Information

<b>Type of certificate:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> single FMU <input type="checkbox"/> multiple FMU <input type="checkbox"/> Group		<b># of group members</b> <hr/>
Type of SLIMF <input type="checkbox"/> small SLIMF <input type="checkbox"/> low intensity SLIMF <input type="checkbox"/> Group SLIMF		<hr/>
<b>Number of FMUs:</b> Less than 100 ha _____ 100-1,000 ha _____ 1,000-10,000 ha _____ Over 10,000 ha    1 _____ <b>TOTAL</b> 1 _____	<b>Location of the non-SLIMFs FMU</b> (refer to the center of the FMU) Latitude E/W 79 _____ degrees    27 _____ minutes  Longitude N/S 46 _____ degrees    18 _____ minutes	
<b>Forest zone:</b> Temperate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Boreal <input type="checkbox"/> Subtropical <input type="checkbox"/> Tropical <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Total forest area in scope of certificate that is:</b> Included in FMUs ≤100 ha _____ Included in FMUs between 100 and 1,000 ha _____ Eligible as low intensity SLIMF FMUs Privately managed <sup>2</sup> 623,472 State managed _____ Community managed <sup>3</sup> _____	
<b># of Forest workers within scope of certificate including contractor ( differentiated by gender):</b> 3 full time - male, 2 part time - male, 1 – nine month contract - male		
<b>Forest Area:</b>		
Forest and non-forest land protected from commercial harvesting and managed primarily for conservation objectives	78,964	
Protected from commercial harvesting and managed primarily for the production of NTFPs or services	0	
Classified as ‘high conservation value forest’	161,978	
Production forest ( from which timber may be harvested)	548,012	
Production forest classified as ‘plantation’	0	
Production forest regenerated primarily by replanting or by a combination of replanting and coppicing of the planted stems <sup>4</sup>	0	

<sup>2</sup> Includes state owned forests leased to private companies for management.

<sup>3</sup> The management and use of the forest and tree resources is controlled by local communities.

<sup>4</sup> Total are regenerated by replanting, NOT annual area. (This area may be different from the area defined as ‘plantation’ for the purpose of calculating the AAF).

<b>List of ‘high conservation values’<sup>5</sup>:</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Values</b>	<b>Area in Ha</b>
<b>1</b> - Forest areas containing globally, nationally or regionally significant concentrations of biodiversity values	AOCs for Red shoulder hawk, bald eagle, wood turtle, white tail deer wintering areas, moose aquatic feeding areas, & heronries. Naturally occurring red spruce stand	51,043
<b>2</b> - Forest 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 exists in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.	None	
<b>3</b> - Forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems. (Does not include areas in Parks or Protected Areas)	Late serial stage white pine, red pine hemlock and undisturbed tolerant hardwood stands	5,424
<b>4</b> - Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations.	Trout Lake & Sturgeon River AOCs	2,652
<b>5</b> - Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities.	None	
<b>6</b> - Forest areas critical to local communities’ traditional cultural identity	Ottawa, French and Mattawa Waterway Parks	102,859

<b>List of chemical pesticides used within the forest area:</b>		
<b>Product Name</b>	<b>Summarized quantitative data &amp; Reason for use</b>	
	<b>Quantity (kg ai)</b>	
<b>Garlon RTU</b>	3.00	Basal Bark - Red oak mgmt.
<b>VisionMax</b>	6.48	Back Pack Foliar - Or & Pw tending
<b>Vision</b>	7.65	Air blast spray - sip for Pr plant
<b>Vision</b>	267.27	Air blast spray - 95% tending Pw/Pr; 5% Pj
<b>VisionMax</b>	129.34	Air blast spray - sip for Pw seeding or natural
<b>VisionMax</b>	465.66	Air blast spray - sip for Pw/Pr natural & plant
<b>VisionMax</b>	171.98	Air blast spray - tending of Pw/Pr natural & plant
<b>VisionMax</b>	199.16	Aerial sip for Pw/Pr plant
<b>Vision</b>	405.33	Aerial tending - 98% Pw/Pr; 2% Pj
<b>VisionMax</b>	1085.45	Aerial tending - 97% Pw/Pr; 3% Sb/Sw
<b>Garlon XRT</b>	84.09	Aerial sip for Pw/Pr plant
<b>Garlon XRT</b>	1081.96	Aerial tending - Pw/Pr/Or

<sup>5</sup> Should be classified according to numbering system given in the [Glossary](#) of the FSC Principles and Criteria (FSC-STD-01-001)

<b>Release XRT</b>	171.54	Aerial sip - Pw/Pr natural & plant
<b>Release XRT</b>	667.49	Aerial tending - Pw/Pr/Sw/Or
	4746.40	Total

<b>List of main commercial timber and non-timber species included in scope of certificate:</b>			
<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Approximate AAC (m3)</b>	<b>Non-timber (✓)</b>
Eastern White Pine	Pinus strobus L.	100,480	<input type="checkbox"/>
Red Pine	Pinus resinosa Ait.	44,784	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jack Pine	Pinus banksiana Lamb.	28,067	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tamarck	Larix laricina K.Koch	Not significant	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Spruce	Picea glauca Voss	46,952	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black Spruce	Picea mariana B.S.P.	57,157	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eastern Hemlock	Tsuga Canadensis Carr.	13,310	<input type="checkbox"/>
Balsam Fir	Abies balsamea Mill.	41,946	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eastern White Cedar	Thuja occidentalis L.	3,717	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trembling Aspen	Populus tremuloides Michx.	145,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yellow Birch	Betula alleghaniensis Britton	38,305	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Birch	Betula papyrifera Marsh.	93,352	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beech	Fagus grandifolia Ehrh.	Not significant	<input type="checkbox"/>
Red Oak	Quercus rubra L.	10,012	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black Cherry	Prunus serotina Ehrh.	Not significant	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sugar Maple	Acer saccharum Marsh.	77,654	<input type="checkbox"/>
Red Maple	Acer rubrum L.	Not significant	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basswood	Tilia Americana L.	Not significant	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black Ash	Fraxinus nigra Marsh.	Not significant	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Hardwood	Other Hardwood	43,274	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Non-timber forest products included in scope:</b>	
<b>Product</b>	<b>Approximate Annual Commercial Production</b>
None	

<b>List of product categories included in scope of joint CW/FM &amp; COC certificate:</b>	
<b>Product</b>	<b>Description</b>
Veneer logs	W1.1 Round wood - Hardwood
Sawlogs	W1.1 Round wood - Both conifer & hardwood
Pulpwood	W1.1 Round wood - Both conifer & hardwood
Chips	W3.1 Wood chips - Both conifer & hardwood
Grindings	W19 Other wood products n.e.c. - Both conifer & hardwood for garden mulch and biofibre

*Note: These products are available for sale as FSC-certified products (include basic description of product - e.g. round wood, pulp wood, sawn timber, kiln-dried sawn timber, chips, resin, non-timber forest products, etc.)*

### 1.1.1 Scope

Forest management activities - planning, harvesting, transportation and silviculture on the Nipissing forest in Ontario. Production of hardwood and softwood logs & biomass.

### **1.2\* Legislative, Administrative and Land Use Context**

Nipissing Forest Resource Management (NFRM) was issued a Sustainable Forest Licence # 542053, for the Nipissing Forest on July 3, 1996. The licence is for all managed crown land on the Nipissing Forest and allows NFRM to harvest all tree species approved for harvest in an approved Forest Management Plan.

### **1.3 Description of Land Ownership and Use**

#### 1.3.1 Ownership and Use Rights of Parties Other than the Certificate Holder

The Sustainable Forest Resource Licence allows for harvesting, renewal and maintenance activities on all Crown lands available for management.

There are 5 First Nations with traditional use on the Nipissing Forest. Nipissing Forest Resource Management has developed working agreements with 3 active First Nations (Dokis, Mattawa Algonquin and Antoine First Nations). The company has provided mapping and information support to the Algonquin land claim negotiations.

Forest products companies in Northeastern Ontario and Quebec receive sawlogs, pulpwood, chips and biomass from the Nipissing Forest.

Local uses are monitored through the MNR Local citizens committee which includes representation from the following groups with an interest in the Nipissing Forest;

- Anglers and hunters
- Cottaging
- Environmental organizations
- Naturalist club
- Trails association

- Mining
- Chamber of commerce

The Forest Management Plan includes a dispute resolution mechanism to address any concerns or issues arising from local use rights.

### 1.3.2 Summary of Non-forestry Activities

While NFRM does not participate in non-forestry activities, the forest is actively used by the general public and other stakeholders for such activities as hunting, fishing, trapping, maple syrup production, canoeing, hiking, ATVing and snowmobiling.

## **1.4 Description of Area(s) Excluded from Scope of Certification**

### 1.4.1 Excision of areas from the scope of certification

Parks and other regulated protected areas are not available for harvesting, renewal & maintenance.

### 1.4.2 Partial certification of large ownership

There are no areas of partial certification.

## **1.5 Management Plan Summary**

The current approved Forest Management Plan covers the period from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

### 1.5.1 Management Objectives

Management Objectives are identified in the approved 2009 Forest Management Plan for the Nipissing Forest. Objectives cover social, environmental and economic considerations. The 2009 Forest Management Plan has identified 42 objectives for managing the Nipissing Forest. Objectives are monitored annually and reported on in year 3, 7 and 10 Annual Reports prepared by NFRM.

### 1.5.2 Forest resources

Forest resources are identified on Forest Resource Inventory (FRI) maps and tabular information provided by MNR and maintained by NFRM. Maintenance includes annual depletion mapping and the inclusion of stands declared “Free-To-Grow” (areas that have been successfully regenerated to MNR requirements). The current FRI dates back to 1989 and a new inventory is expected in 2014. NFRM also utilizes recent 2008/2009 digital photography that covers the entire forest area.

### 1.5.3 Silvicultural Systems

Three silvicultural systems are utilized on the Nipissing Forest – selection, shelterwood and clear cutting. Shelterwood management is used for both mid-tolerant hardwood and conifer tree species. Shelterwood management involves two to four stages of management. Residual tree and patch requirements are specified for areas being managed under the clear cut silvicultural system. Selection management is practiced in better quality tolerant hardwood stands.

#### 1.5.4 Management strategy for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species

Area of Concern (AOC) prescriptions are used to protect rare threatened and endangered species based upon Provincial Acts & Regulations and the “Forest Management Guide for Conserving Biodiversity at the Stand & Site Scales”. Values are identified and confirmed by the Ministry of Natural Resources. NFRM field staff and contracted tree markers assist in identifying potential new values.

#### 1.5.5 Management Structures

Nipissing Forest Resource Management Inc. is a legal corporation established in the Province of Ontario in 1995. NFRM has five shareholders including Tembec, GP North Woods LP, Goulard Lumber, R. Fryer Forest Products Ltd. & Hec. Clouthier & Sons. The Board of Directors includes representation from the five shareholders, the General Manager and a non-shareholder director from the general public. The Board of Directors operates on a consensus basis when making decisions.

#### 1.5.6 Monitoring Procedures

NFRM prepares a 10 Year and Annual Compliance Plans which identify monitoring requirements. NFRM uses the MNR’s Forest Operations Inspection Program (FOIP) and only certified Compliance Inspectors to conduct inspections. All operations are subject to inspections in accordance with the MNR approved Compliance Plans. NFRM also has an intensive and extensive monitoring program for silvicultural projects to insure the successful regeneration of harvested and naturally depleted areas.

#### 1.5.7 Environmental safeguard

Values identified are protected through the application of Area of Concern prescriptions and the application of these prescriptions, are monitored through NFRM’s compliance inspection program.

### **1.6 Maximum Sustained Yield for main commercial species**

#### 1.6.1 Assumptions

Natural Forest Succession, Post Renewal Succession, Growth & Yield Curves, Forest Disturbance Frequency, volumes left un-harvested, accumulating forest reserves (required retention).

#### 1.6.2 Source Data

Forest Resource Inventory, MNR Values, business data (Harvest and Silviculture tracking)



## 1.7 Current and Projected Annual Harvest by Species (main commercial)

Table 28.1. Available long-term projected volume, by species group

Term	SPF	PO	BW	CE	MH	UHLH	PWR	AllProd
2009	174.12	145.00	93.35	3.72	77.65	91.59	145.26	744.02
2019	148.01	134.12	77.60	3.71	81.24	80.41	139.80	676.18
2029	125.80	120.00	63.02	3.87	69.05	71.33	178.73	643.20
2039	125.00	120.00	75.35	3.65	59.57	69.94	171.66	635.38
2049	125.00	110.00	64.69	3.27	59.09	66.80	152.36	592.78
2059	135.00	110.56	66.52	2.69	57.31	66.80	154.83	605.32
2069	143.90	120.00	57.84	2.44	62.26	66.80	188.51	651.40
2079	145.00	120.00	51.54	2.38	65.94	66.80	179.97	640.87
2089	145.00	120.00	52.01	2.55	63.45	66.80	192.81	651.58
2099	145.00	110.48	42.24	3.09	56.70	66.80	221.49	654.59
2109	145.00	120.00	43.40	3.82	62.39	66.80	241.33	690.78

## 1.8 Eligibility as a SLIMF

Not applicable

## 2.0 THE STANDARD(S)

### 2.1 Standard Used

QMI-SAI GLOBAL - Locally adapted Standard for Assessing Forest Management in the Great Lakes/Saint-Lawrence (GLSL) region, version 2012-June.

### 2.2 The Standard

A copy of the standard can be obtained from the following website:

<http://www.saiglobal.com/assurance/forestry/FSC.htm>

### 2.3\* Description of Local Adaptation of Generic Standard

The generic QMI-SAI Global standard has been adapted to include indicators from the Great Lakes/Saint Lawrence standard. It was submitted for public consultation before being officially published and used.

## EVALUATION

Evaluation Date(s):	March 4-7 2013
Lead Evaluator:	Martin Litchfield RPF
Evaluation Team:	Rod Seabrook, biologist
	Daniel Martin, F. Eng.

Certification Report Peer Reviewer(s):	N/A for recertification audit
<b>Task</b>	<b>Person Days (excluding travel to and from the evaluation region)</b>
Pre-evaluation	N/A
Preparatory Work	1.0
Documents, Records, Field work	14.5
Stakeholder Interviews	4
TOTAL	19.5

### 3.1 Description of Evaluation

#### 3.1.1 Itinerary

The audit was conducted as follows:

March.04/2013          Opening meeting  
Review of the 2012 audit findings  
Review of effective implementation of 2012 NCR's  
Analysis of mandatory indicators  
Analysis of indicators for conformance to Principle #1  
Analysis of indicators for conformance to Principle #4  
Analysis of indicators for conformance to Principle #7

March.05/2013          Nipissing Forest field verification  
Site inspections  
Identification of FSC field indicators  
Interviews with contractors  
Interviews with company staff  
Interview with a First Nation Chief

March.06/2013          Office review  
Analysis of indicators for conformance to Principle #2  
  
Analysis of indicators for conformance to Principle #3  
Analysis of indicators for conformance to Principle #5  
Analysis of indicators for conformance to Principle #6  
Analysis of indicators for conformance to Principle #8

March.07/2013          Office review  
Analysis of indicators for conformance to Principle #9  
Analysis of indicators for conformance to Principle #10

Closing meeting  
 Identification of non-conformances  
 Identification of opportunities for improvement

### 3.1.2\*Approach

The audit assessed conformance with the FSC Great Lakes saint Lawrence Forest Management Standard as well as the company's forest management program utilizing the following techniques:

- Review of the company's policies and procedures
- Review of the company's documentation and records
- Review of correspondence and communications
- Interviews with staff
- Interviews with contractors
- Interviews with First Nations
- Interviews with Stakeholders
- Field assessment of conformance
- Review of previous audit findings
- Review of the current Forest Management Plan
- Review of the independent forest audit (IFA) findings

### 3.1.3\* Selected FMUs and Rationale

Evaluation of the Nipissing Forest  
 There are no other FMU's within the scope of the certificate

### 3.1.4\* Sites Visited

<b>EVALUATION SITES</b>				
<b>FMU</b>	<b>Site #</b>	<b>Evaluation Site Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Indicators Evaluated</b>
NFRM	1	Liard block 48	Pw Uniform shelterwood	1.1.4, 1.1.6, 3.3.1, 4.5.2
	2	Goulard block 231	Clear-cutting Pj Sb forest unit	3.3.1, 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.1.8
	3	Sturgeon block 193	Mixed wood clear-cutting, grinding and chipping	5.2.1
	4	Sturgeon block 156	Clear-cutting and chipping	5.3.1, 5.3.2
	5	2011 PCT in Pw and Pr	Forestry Futures with First Nations	6.3.7,6.3.10, 6.3.13, 6.3.14, 6.3.16, 6.3.17, 6.3.18, 6.3.19
	6	2011 PCT	Red pine thinning	6.3.7,6.3.10, 6.3.13, 6.3.14, 6.3.16, 6.3.17, 6.3.18, 6.3.19
	7	2010 Plant	Plant to Sb and Pj	6.3.7,6.3.10, 6.3.13, 6.3.14, 6.3.16, 6.3.17, 6.3.18, 6.3.19
	8	21012 FTG survey	Full tree skidding & exceptions monitoring	6.4.6, 6.4.7
	9	2012 aerial spray	Pw US 2009 first removal	6.6.2, 6.6.3

	10	2012 aerial spray	1995 Pw seeding cut	8.2.1, 8.2.3
	11	2012 aerial spray	2004 Pw seed cut	8.2.1, 8.2.3

3.1.5\* Stakeholder Consultation

The audit included consultation with the following groups:

- North Bay Local Citizens Committee
- Anglers and hunters group (1)
- Cottagers (2)
- Environmental groups (2)
- Aboriginal Working Group (1)
- Independent loggers group (1)
- Chamber of Commerce (1)
- Naturalist Club (2)
- Mining (1)
- Silvicultural contractors group (1)
- Trails (1)
- Cultural heritage (1)
- Education (1)
- Ministry of Natural Resources (3)
- Dokis First Nation
- Mattawa Algonquin First Nation
- Antoine First Nation

3.1.6 \*Additional Evaluation Techniques

The audit included additional consultation with Independent harvesting licences

**4.0 OBSERVATIONS**

<b>PRINCIPLE 1</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence of conformity or non-conformity</b>
1.1	Minor non-conformance related to the monitoring of legal changes
1.2	Minor non-conformance related to the minimum balance in the Renewal Trust fund balance
1.3	Complete list of ILO and Environmental agreements
1.4	Proactive resolution of differences between FSC and Ontario requirements

1.5	Verified that there were no FOIP illegal harvest in 2012
1.6	OFI : Consider specifically identifying the NFRM commitment to FSC in the company policies
<b>PRINCIPLE 2</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence of conformity or non-conformity</b>
2.1	FMP developed by NFRM and approved by MNR
2.2	Extensive consultation with tourism operators and other stakeholders
2.3	Minor non-conformance related to harvest allocation dispute resolution
<b>PRINCIPLE 3</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence of conformity or non-conformity</b>
3.1	Minor non-conformance related to the expiry of First Nation agreements
3.2	Each Community had identified and mapped their Native Values and Specific AOCs have been developed to protect Native Values
3.3	Identification and protection of First Nation values
3.4	NFRM/First Nation agreements contain a commitment to pay for traditional knowledge
<b>PRINCIPLE 4</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence of conformity or non-conformity</b>
4.1	NFRM have demonstrated that they encourage the local communities by procuring goods and services from local suppliers. They are actively working with the local community to develop a new biomass project. Also, they are actively working with the MNR to market wood products that are currently available for harvest.
4.2	Safe Workplace Ontario certification renewed. Very extensive and effective requirements at start-up for all silvicultural contractors.
4.3	Staff confirmed that NFRM does not impede potential union considerations
4.4	Five stage consultation process for the 2009-2019 Forest management Plan. Due to the nature of the FMU, NFRM have developed a history of working closely with stakeholders and adjacent landowners. There is evidence that the managers consult on a regular basis with stakeholders and give meaningful notices of upcoming forest management activities.
4.5	The issue resolution process described in the FMP manual covers the requirement in regards to forest planning
<b>PRINCIPLE 5</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence of conformity or non-conformity</b>

5.1	Confirmed that there is adequate staff to ensure proper implementation of the management plan.
5.2	. This being a Crown forest, it is mandatory to seek the optimal and highest and best value for forest products. Local transformation is privileged when feasible. Crown timber must be offered to appropriate wood processing facilities in Ontario within an economic hauling distance of the harvest area before it is sold outside the Province. During the field visit, good recovery and utilization was observed
5.3	<p>Minimum utilization standards have been designed to promote good forest management by ensuring optimum utilization of Crown forest resources on harvesting operations. The minimum utilization standards must be followed on all forest operations unless otherwise described in an approved Forest Management Plan.</p> <p>The generic tree marking prescriptions will include targets for retaining live cavity trees, super canopy trees, mast (nut and berry producing) trees and conifer patches for thermal protection. During the field audit, it was found that slashing and chipping residue was properly disposed of and not left piled on site.</p>
5.4	A commercial maple syrup production operation is being developed north of Mattawa. Members of the Antoine First Nation are establishing a tourism-business based on the 28 maple syrup site.
5.5	The landscape provides for a diverse range of flora and fauna including; 51 mammals, 23 reptiles and amphibians, and over 200 bird species
5.6	Total harvest for three years cumulative amounts to 37% utilization of the FMP available harvest area for 3 years of plan implementation.
<b>PRINCIPLE 6</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence of conformity or non-conformity</b>
6.1	<p>The Forest Operations Prescription Control document details the prescription for each block, including the harvest method, logging method, the operations timing, areas of concern (AOC) for each stand, operating block considerations, pre-harvest assessment compilation sheet.</p> <p>Benchmark model run was executed assuming no human intervention on the forest through the 160 year planning horizon, and development of the forest was left to natural disturbance and succession. This model was then used as the foundation for the base model (introducing human intervention) as a starting point for exploring the range of possibilities for management and providing insight into what the forest is capable of producing under specific management regimes.</p> <p>Balancing management strategy based on economic, ecological objectives. Stakeholder consultation was ensured throughout this entire process.</p>

	Very well documented forest management plan, supported by appropriate operational procedures.
6.2	Species at risk AOC prescriptions are adequately integrated and implemented in the management plan
6.3	<p>Forest management operations are conducted in a manner that maintains the integrity of small streams, seepages, and woodland pools.</p> <p>The FMP is designed to leave the insular and peninsular patches standing forever in the clearcuts. The volume that is left standing is not included in the AAC calculation.</p> <p>There are three silviculture systems employed on the Nipising Forest under which forest management activities (harvest and renewal) occur. Each one of these systems (Clearcut, Shelterwood, Single Tree Selection) are prescribed and implemented based on groupings of forest tree species with similar silvicultural and ecological aspects. Vegetation management begins with harvesting and varying proportions of the canopy are removed.</p> <p>Minor non-conformance extension related to partial harvests</p>
6.4	<p>A gap analysis has been complete, detailed maps and data are available at the NFRM office.</p> <p>The land use strategy is substantially based on the work of citizen round tables that were established in three planning regions, one of them being GLSL. This was part of the Lands for Life planning process. In total, the three round tables heard from over 15,000 people.</p> <p>The Bass Lake and Clear Lake areas have been suggested to the MNR as candidate protected areas. These areas have come up during the recent gap analysis process. Minor non-conformance related to protected areas</p>
6.5	The field inspection demonstrated that implementation of Best Management Practices is effective
6.6	<p>Tree markers are instructed to remove trees that are susceptible to, or show evidence of being infected by the White Pine Blister Rust.</p> <p>The use of herbicides is based on five elements that balance social, environmental and forest resource aspects. The approach used by NFRM involves steps to characterize and map candidate sites according to the need for vegetation management. At this stage, the question of whether a non-herbicide based method can achieve the management objective is posed, and the answer forms part of the rationale for the decision to use herbicides.</p> <p>Minor non-conformance related to herbicide reductions</p>
6.7	Procedures are in place to ensure that 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. No leaking equipment was witnessed during the field inspection. Employees demonstrated good knowledge of the requirements.
6.8	There has been no recent application of biological control agents.

	No GMO have been used on the Nipissing Forest
6.9	The audit verified that no exotic species have been used.
6.10	There have been no conversions to plantations in the Nipissing Forest. Aggregate pits are replanted as part of the rehabilitation. Slash is piled and burnt every year – many of these areas are then replanted.
<b>PRINCIPLE 7</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence of conformity or non-conformity</b>
7.1	The 2009-2019 FMP and associated documentation for the Nipissing Forest fully meets the requirements of criterion 7.1.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a list of main strengths and weaknesses with respect to the overall conformity with the Forest Stewardship Standard used for the evaluation;</li> <li>- a summarized presentation of findings with clear information to enable the reader to make an easy correlation between the requirements of each of the criteria of the Forest Stewardship Standard used and the performance of the certified operation;</li> </ul> OFI to address missing supplemental documentation
7.2	NFRM follows the Ontario forest management planning requirements which are very comprehensive and rigorous. Management plans cover 10 year periods with an update at the five year point. The current FMP is in Phase I. Year 3, 7 and 10 Annual Reports require a review of operations and consideration of results of monitoring and implementation of the plan to date – this information is used to inform preparation of Phase II or the next FMP, as applicable. Other sources of monitoring that may inform planning include independent forest audits whose recommendations must be addressed and spoken to in the FMP
7.3	The training was attended by staff and licensees and their contractors. Use and handling of pesticides covered by Chemical Application Policy in H&S Policies and Procedures. Health and Safety is covered with staff through review of H&S policies and procedures. Sampling of staff training records confirmed appropriate and current training. The compliance plan requires NFRM to report incidents of non-compliance under FOIP – compliance inspectors are certified and abide by a Code of Ethics which includes an obligation to report accurately. The Hazard Recommendation Form is available to staff to report any safety concerns or hazards remaining unresolved
7.4	The FMP summary is available to the public on MNRs forest management plan site. The plan summary is also available to the public on NFRM’s website.
<b>PRINCIPLE 8</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence of conformity or non-conformity</b>



<p>8.1</p>	<p>The Provincial Forest Operations Inspection Program (FOIP) is the routine program to monitor compliance to the FMP – regular inspections of in-progress and completed operations are conducted. The FMPM requires periodic reporting on FMP achievement (i.e. Yr 3, Yr 7 and Yr 10 ARs) – See Yr 3 report Section 3. Examples of the outputs from the monitoring programs included the 2009-19 Nipissing Forest FMP Supp Doc 6.1.24, 2011-12 Yr 3 AR, and Summary of FOIP inspection reports.</p> <p>Monitoring programs are comprehensive and the information generated is used to modify practices and improve performance.</p> <p>Various reports (e.g. NEBIE plot network project description report 2000, Spring/fall planting trial report July 2007, Partners Report 2006 and 2011 Effects of early herbaceous and woody vegetation control on eastern white pine) demonstrate NFRM participation in establishment of plots to evaluate various aspects of forest management practices over time.</p>
<p>8.2</p>	<p>Yields are projected during planning and monitored during harvest and the Annual reports summarize wood deliveries to receiving mills. Ongoing surveys of regeneration are being conducted to monitor the condition of the forest. The FMP considers the current forest condition including habitat feature changes and factors habitat supply into modeling and management decisions. Updates to values in operating areas is ongoing, in particular during tree marking, and changes in key habitat values are communicated to MNR and adjustments to operations are performed accordingly – values information is managed in NRVIS</p> <p>Several monitoring programs are undertaken by NFRM. Exceptions to guideline requirements are monitored and reported in the ARs. Routine compliance monitoring of forest operations is conducted and renewal programs are regularly monitored.</p> <p>Table 16 column 5 of the HCVF Report discusses the monitoring program for each HCV. Areas of concern are monitored during operations under the FOIP reports. Regeneration monitoring checks are conducted for hemlock. Prescriptions for values are adjusted during forest management planning to account for new information and understandings and are incorporated into the new FMP. MNR Science and Tech division is a key centre for research into forestry impacts and adjustment to mandatory management guides – e.g. Stand and Site Guide. Area of Concern prescriptions for cultural heritage values are implemented during operations and monitoring takes place under FOIP. The NFRM manager was reviewer on new Cultural Heritage Guide.</p> <p>NFRM monitors renewal expenditures and reports the information in the ARs. NFRM does not monitor the business activities of the licensees. NFRM is a member of the Provincial Forest Renewal Trust Committee. Meeting discussions cover activities and developments affecting the Renewal Trust</p>

	Fund accounts.
8.3	NFRM follows the Provincial Scaling System to track wood movement from the Nipissing Forest for purposes of payment of Crown charges and for tracking Chain of Custody ;however, NFRM does not have a documented procedure that meets the requirements of 8.3.1
8.4	The year three management unit annual report serves as the mid-plan review by describing progress on implementation of the forest management plan to date including whether or not the long-term management direction remains valid for the second five-year term. The year seven annual report identifies any significant events (e.g. natural disturbances, markets, labour disruptions) that have affected the achievement of objectives in the forest management plan. The year seven annual report will be used in the development of the next forest management plan. The year ten annual report updates the assessment, analysis and review in the year seven annual report to reflect the full implementation of the forest management plan. The year ten annual report will be used in the development of the planned operations for the second five year term in the next forest management plan. The year 7 AR will be produced according to the planning cycle.
8.5	Publicly funded research reports are available on MNR and Natural Resource Canada websites. NFRM produces publicly available annual reports on forest management activities including monitoring results.

**PRINCIPLE 9**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence of conformity or non-conformity</b>
9.1	<p>The current version of The High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) Report for the Nipissing Forest is Version 3.0 Feb 2013.</p> <p>In preparing the HCVF Report the authors utilized the National Framework plus Annex D of the FSC GLSL Region Draft 3.0 2010 for Species at Risk. The Report was authored by T. Clark (Biologist) and R. Burkhardt (R.P.F.). The species at risk portion was updated in 2013 by K. Szuba (PhD Biol., R.P.F.). Phase 1 identification of HCV shows all categories of HCV were reviewed using appropriate sources of data and local expertise. Phase 2 management of HCVF describes responsibilities for inventory and monitoring, management prescriptions and procedures for evaluation the effectiveness of management prescriptions. Management prescriptions are typically based on implementation of AOC prescriptions approved in the FMP. An external review of the HCVF assessment has not been conducted and was identified as a minor non-conformity.</p> <p>The HCVF report Version 2.0 is available on NFRM’s website; however this version was out of date at the time of audit. NFRM was uploading the current (Version 3.0 Feb 2013). Maps are available by request (email) to M. Lockhart at NFRM.</p>

	The Report does not currently describe the public consultation process – according to the NFRM manager no comments were received during the process. An Opportunity for Improvement was suggested by the audit team.
9.2	Evidence of consultation with other potentially interested parties regarding HCV was not well organized by NFRM and an Opportunity for Improvement in this regard was identified. Consultation was sought from WWF, Nature Conservancy, Ontario Nature, Wildlands League, Ducks Unlimited and Sierra Club of Canada on the HCVF process and report – according to the NFRM manager no responses were received from these groups. An Opportunity for Improvement regarding notification of potentially interested groups of the availability of the HCVF report when updates are made and inviting their comment, was made by the audit team.
9.3	The publicly available FMP describes the HCVFs and the prescriptions for addressing them. Field observations demonstrate proper protection of values identified in the FMP. Category 1 HCVF abut the southwest boundary (French Severn Forest) and are associated with management of the Loring Deer Yard – deer yards are a key feature managed by MNR. Category 6 HCVF is associated with the French River Waterway Park which carries over to the Sudbury Forest and is managed as a waterway park on that forest as well. Use of the precautionary approach is referenced throughout the document and evident in the prescriptions applied and compliance to the prescriptions during implementation of the plan.
9.4	HCVF monitoring of compliance is done the FOIP and compliance summaries are presented in the Annual Reports
<b>PRINCIPLE 10</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence of conformity or non-conformity</b>
	NFRM does not plant any non-native species; Principle 10 does not apply

**4.1 Observations Resulting from Stakeholder Consultation**

First Nation representatives appreciate the support assistance provided by NFRM in their pursuit of the land claim settlement

Independent loggers are concerned about the timber allocation process within NFRM, but have not used the dispute resolution process.

**4.2 Corrective Action Taken Prior to the Certification Decision**

The Minor non-conformance 2012.2 related to the monitoring of water crossing is now closed

The Minor non-conformance related to conflicting direction regarding partial harvests is extended as meeting with FSC Canada to address the concerns is scheduled in a few weeks

## **5.0 CERTIFICATION DECISION**

### **5.1\* Non-Compliances**

Major non-compliance: None

Minor non-compliance:

(1.2.1) NFRM has not achieved the required minimum financial balance in the Forest Renewal Trust fund. A system to achieve the required minimum balance by 2014 is required and monitored during the year.

(3.1.4) While liaison with First Nations is working well, the Dokis, Mattawa Algonquin and Antoine First Nation agreements have expired in 2009

(1.1.1) The roles and responsibilities for the identification and monitoring of legal changes and training is not being consistently implemented

(6.6) NFRM needs to clarify the use or phase-out of herbicides

(8.3.1) While there are controls and systems being used for the chain of custody tracking, there is no specific procedure in place

(9.1.2) An external review of the HC VF assessment could not be confirmed

(6.4.6) A contingency block (#09-071) is inside the proposed Bass Lake and Clear Lake protected area.

(2.3.1) Disputes and concerns particularly regarding block allocations have not utilized the dispute resolutions mechanisms available

CAR 2012-03 re 6.3.9 will need to be extended as meeting with FSC Canada are scheduled in the next few weeks.

### **5.2 Difficult Assessments**

None identified

### **5.3 Certification Conditions**

Minor non-conformances require a root cause analysis and a Corrective Action Plan within 60 days

### **5.4 Opportunities for Improvement**

- Consider updating the NFRM policies for currency and staff responsibilities

- Consider clarifying the NFRM commitment to the FSC regional standard
- 4.1.5 – Consider defining the equivalency of staff positions between NFRM and MNR to ensure that the wages offered by Nipissing Forest Resource Management Inc.(NFRM), will be similar to the range of wages offered by the MNR for similar positions and qualifications.
- (7.1.1) Consider modifying Supplemental Documentation Section 6.1.29 Forest Renewal Monitoring Protocol – as only one page was included. It is an Excel Sheet and all pages were not captured
- (9.1.3/9.2.1) NFRN should consider describing the public consultation process and provide a summary of concerns within the HCVF report, including a summary of concerns.
- (9.2.2) NFRM should consider notifying potentially interested groups of the availability of the HCVF report when updates are made and inviting their comment

### **5.5 Positive Observations**

- The positive liaison with First Nation communities
- The effective start-up checklist and block information process
- The innovative systematic silvicultural monitoring program
- The strategic employment of First Nation contractors in the silvicultural thinning programs
- The additional stakeholder consultation to resolve the Restoule road concerns

### **5.5 Certification Decision Statement**

Nipissing Forest Resource Management Inc. has demonstrated, subject to the correction of the identified non-conformities, that the described system of management is being implemented consistently over the whole forest area covered by the scope of the certificate.

## **6.0 TRACKING OF CERTIFIED FOREST PRODUCTS**

### **6.1 Risk**

The mandatory MNR Bill of Lading system controls and documents all the wood produced on the Nipissing Forest. Six receiving mills have a chain of custody system that classifies the Nipissing Forest as low risk.

### **6.2 Control Systems**

The Control system is the MNR Bill of Lading system and the iTREES documentation records. The Bill of Ladings identifies the following:

- Date
- Product
- Species

- Weight
- Contractor
- Trucker
- Origin/licence
- MNR approval number

The weight is converted to volume using the MNR weight fact

## **7.0 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUP CERTIFICATIONS**

Not a group certification

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### **Complaints, Disputes and Appeals**

The Technical Manager- Forestry program is responsible for coordinating all activities relating to complaints, disputes and appeals.

The complainant is responsible for providing the recipient of the complaint with the objective evidence to substantiate the complaint, dispute or appeal in writing.

- Upon receipt of the complaint, dispute or appeal the Technical Manager of the Forestry program will provide an initial response, including an outline of the proposed course of action to follow up on the complaint, within two (2) weeks of receiving a complaint, dispute or appeal.
- The Technical Manager-Forestry program or designee shall keep the complainant(s) informed of progress in evaluating the complaint, and shall have investigated the allegations and specified all its proposed actions in response to the complaint within three (3) months of receiving the complaint.

A complainant has the opportunity to refer its complaint to FSC's dispute resolution process if the issue has not been resolved through the full implementation of QMI-SAI Global's procedures.