Surveillance Audit Report

Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Standard

August 19, 2007

A. Program Participant's Name: WI DNR State Forests FRS #1: 1Y941

B. Scope:
The SFI Program of Wisconsin DNR on the State Forests including land management operations and related sustainable forestry activities. State Forests are: Black River State Forest, Brule River, Coulee Experimental, Flambeau River, Governor Knowles, Kettle Moraine- Northern and Southern units, Northern Highland/American Legion, Peshtigo River and Point Beach.

☒ No Change ☐ Changed (see Section H, revised scope statement noted on FRS)

C. NSF Audit Team: Lead Auditor: Mike Ferrucci; Auditor: Robert Hrubes

D. Audit Date(s): July 16-19 2007

E. Reference Documentation: 2005-2009 SFI Standard®

F. Audit Results: Based on the results at this visit, the auditor concluded

☒ Acceptable with no nonconformances; or

☐ Acceptable with minor nonconformances that should be corrected before the next regularly scheduled surveillance visit;

☐ Not acceptable with one or two major nonconformances - corrective action required;

☐ Several major nonconformances - the certification may be canceled unless immediate action is taken

G. Changes to Operations or to the SFI Standard:

Are there any significant changes in operations, procedures, specifications, FRS, etc. from the previous visit? ☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, provide brief description of the changes

H. Other Issues Reviewed:

☒ Yes ☐ No Public report from previous audit(s) is posted on SFB web site.

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N.A. SFI and other relevant logos or labels are utilized correctly.

I. Corrective Action Requests: No Corrective Action Requests were issued this visit.

☒ Corrective Action Plan is not required.

At the conclusion of this Surveillance Audit visit no CARs remain open.

In addition, four Opportunities for Improvement (OFIs) were identified.

Appendices:

Appendix I: Surveillance Notification Letter and Audit Schedule
Appendix II: Corrective Action Requests
Appendix III: Public Surveillance Audit Report
Appendix IV: Audit Matrix

Appendix I

Surveillance Notification Letter and Audit Schedule

January 17, 2007

Paul Pingrey, Forest Certification Specialist
Bureau of Forest Management
WI Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921

Re: 2007 SFI Surveillance Audit for Wisconsin State Forests (FRS 1Y941)

Dear Mr. Pingrey:

NSF-ISR is pleased to submit the following proposal for the SFI Annual Audit for Wisconsin State Forests and for a readiness review (scoping) of other DNR lands. The project will occur from July 16-20 and would include the Black River and Governor Knowles State Forests and one other forest, depending on the sites chosen for the field scoping visits for other lands.

Included is sufficient time to review documentation of your other state lands programs and develop an itinerary that makes best use of the field time in helping all parties understand what is involved in SFI Certification. I expect to work with you and with several representatives of the various agencies to make certain that the SFI obligations are clear, and that the division of SFI-related responsibilities between the forestry bureau and the other agencies is appropriately addressed.

As in the past, NSF and SCS will coordinate our annual audit activities. This proposal covers all SFI-related costs, and includes:

1. Review of Documentation
2. Client Communication
3. Audit Preparation
4. Office and Field audit
5. 2 Reports (Surveillance and Readiness Review)
6. Annual Administration and Oversight

We look forward to continuing our working relationship with the Bureau of Forest Management, WI Department of Natural Resources.

Sincerely yours,

Mike Ferrucci, NSF Lead Auditor

Forest Certification Audit – Schedule for July 16-20, 2007
Wisconsin State Forest Annual Surveillance Audit and DNR Lands Scoping Review

Properties to Visit on the Field Audit

- Pine Island Wildlife Area
- Devils Lake State Park
- Badger Addition
- Mirror Lake State Park
- Dells of the Wisconsin River State Natural Area
- Sandhill State Wildlife Area
- Meadow Valley State Wildlife Area
- Black River State Forest
- Dike 17 Wildlife Area
- Straight Lake State Park/Wildlife Area
- Crex Meadows – Glacial Lake Grantsburg State Wildlife Areas (possibly Amsterdam Sloughs, Fish Lake Wildlife Area, Danbury Wildlife Area, and the Namekagon Barrens)
- Governor Knowles State Forest
- Perot State Park & Great River State Trail
- Coulee State Experimental Forest
- Rush Creek State Natural Area
- Lower Wisconsin State Riverway

July 16 (Monday)

7:15 A.M. Gather at GEF 2 – transfer luggage to van

7:30 A.M. Leave for Pine Island Wildlife Area (41 miles)

8:30 A.M. Arrive at Pine Island field station off Levee Road. View recent timber harvest and discuss management issues related to the levee or any other unique considerations on the property. Leave by 10:15 A.M. and drive to Devils Lake State Park (23 miles).

10:45 A.M. Arrive at Devils Lake State Park (Red Oak Shelter on south shore). Provide a property overview, including the status of the master plans for Devils Lake, Mirror Lake and the recent Badger addition. (The auditors will be interested in hearing about how we manage property under an old master plan, a new plan and how we develop guidance for new property.) Point out achievements and challenges. Tour property to see active management highlights.

Catered lunch after the opening meeting, before field tour. (Rich Evans to arrange for lunches. Budget code FRLM/SL 1664 FRNQ) Plan to depart by about 2 P.M. and drive to Dells Natural Area (about 22 miles).

2:30 P.M. Dells of the Wisconsin River State Natural Area. Meet at Crandall Pines parking lot. Visit Witches Gulch if there is time. Discuss the unique situation in respect to the recreational lease and how DNR came to own and manage the property. Explain the prescriptive master plan and the role of the citizen advisory committee. Leave by 3:30 P.M. and drive the Sandhill (Babcock – 60 miles).

4:30 P.M. Arrive at Sandhill State Wildlife Area. Provide a property overview for Sandhill and Meadow Valley. Explain the unique features of the property and how forest management is used to achieve property goals. Discuss the relationship with adjoining federal properties and the terms of the DNR lease at Meadow Valley. Leave by about 6:30 P.M. and drive to BRF (50 miles).

7:30 P.M. Arrive at Black River Falls (Holiday Inn Express) for the evening.

July 17 (Tuesday)

8 A.M. Black River State Forest

- Introductions
- Overview of progress on open Corrective Action Requests for the State Forest Program as a whole.
- Black River State Forest overview and accomplishment report.

- ~ 10 A.M. - Field tour including timber harvests, development projects, ATV use, and other state property in the boundary of the forest (including Dike 17 Wildlife Area and consideration of State Natural Areas on the forest).
- Plan on a sack lunch in the field. (Peter Bakken to arrange for lunches. Use budget code FRLM/SL 1664 FTAV.)

4:00 P.M. Conclude by around 4:00 P.M. Audit team then drives to St. Croix Falls (140 miles – 2.5 hours). Stay at the Holiday Inn Express.

July 18 (Wednesday)

7:30 A.M. Straight Lake State Park/Wildlife Area (20 miles near Luck – meet at the intersection of 120th Street and 270th Ave.). Overview and discussion of plan options. Leave by 9:30 A.M. and drive to Crex Meadows (25 miles – Grantsburg).

10:00 A.M. Crex Meadows and Glacial Lake Grantsburg – management issues and challenges. Meet at the Crex Meadows Interpretive Center (102 E Crex Ave, Grantsburg, WI). (Noon - Stop at Subway for lunch in Grantsburg.)

12:30 P.M. Arrive at Governor Knowles State Forest headquarters (325 State Road 70, Grantsburg, WI) for property overview and tour of active management areas (including harvests selected by the auditors) and special features.

5 P.M. Conclude Governor Knowles field visits and drive to Eau Claire - Plaza Hotel and Suites for the evening (121 miles – 2+ hours)

July 19 (Thursday)

7:15 A.M. Leave Eau Claire and drive to Perrot State Park – Trempealeau (65 miles)

8:45 A.M. Perrot State Park and Great River State Trail. Management issues and challenges. Leave by 10:15 A.M. and drive to West Salem. Greg Edge will join us at Perrot. Pick up lunch - Subway in West Salem. (25 miles).

11:00 A.M. Coulee Experimental Forest – overview and land management field review.
Leave by around 3:00 P.M. Drive to Rush Creek State Natural Area (40 miles)

4:00 P.M. Rush Creek State Natural Area. Issues and challenges.
Drive to Prairie du Chien - Country Inn and Suites (23 miles) for the evening.

After dinner Discuss State Forest audit findings. [Forest Lands Section Chief Jim Warren to join the group before dinner.]

July 20 (Friday)

7:00 A.M. Lower Wisconsin State Riverway. Brad Hutnik will ride with the audit team, meeting at the Country Inn and Suites at 7 A.M. Brad will give a windshield tour on the ride from Prairie du Chien to Mazomanie.

By 9:00 A.M. Arrive at the Whistle Stop Café – 18 Brodhead Street, Mazomanie to meet up with other Regional Staff. Consider management issues unique to the property, including aesthetics, wildlife, recreation, historic sites, roads, trails, ATVs, harvests, etc. Leave for Madison by 11:15 A.M.

12:30 to 1:45 P.M. Auditors meet privately to discuss findings (GEF2 – Room 427)

1:45 to 3:45 P.M. – Exit Reports for State Forest Surveillance Review and Other DNR Land Scoping Assessment (GEF 2 – Room G09). Auditors leave at 3:45 P.M. for airport.

Appendix II

Corrective Action Requests

None issued during 2007 Surveillance Audit.

Appendix III

Public SFI Surveillance Audit Report

The SFI Program of the Wisconsin DNR State Forests has demonstrated continuing conformance with the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard ®, 2005-2009 Edition (SFIS), according to the NSF-ISR SFIS Certification Audit Process. NSF-ISR initially certified the Wisconsin State Forest System to the SFIS on May 5, 2004. In 2006 program was re-certified to the standard under the "Continuous Surveillance Audit Option" based on this and a previous surveillance audit. This report describes the fourth follow-up Surveillance Audit designed to focus on changes in the standard, changes in operations, the management review system, and efforts at continuous improvement.

The SFI Certification Audit was performed on sustainable forestry activities of the Wisconsin DNR and land management operations on Wisconsin State Forests encompassing over 517,000 acres of publicly owned forests, including the following properties:

- Black River State Forest
- Brule River
- Coulee Experimental
- Flambeau River
- Governor Knowles
- Kettle Moraine- Northern and Southern Units
- Northern Highland/American Legion
- Peshtigo River
- Point Beach

The surveillance audit was performed by NSF-ISR on July 16-19, 2007by an audit team including Michael Ferrucci, Lead Auditor and Dr. Robert Hrubes. Audit team members fulfill the qualification criteria for conducting SFIS Certification Audits contained in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Audit Procedures and Qualifications (SFI APQ). The Wisconsin DNR's representative was Paul Pingrey, Forest Certification Specialist who was supported during the audit by and Teague Prichard, State Forest Specialist. This group visited Black River, Governor Knowles, and Coulee Experimental State Forests.

The objective of the audit was to assess continuing conformance of the firm's SFI Program to the requirements of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Standard, 2005-2009 Edition and to recertify the program under the "Continuous Surveillance Audit" option. Forest practices that were the focus of field inspections included those that have been conducted since the previous field audit conducted during July of 2005. In addition, SFI obligations to promote sustainable forestry practices, to ensure the smooth functioning of the SFI program on Wisconsin's State Forests and to incorporate continual improvement systems were reexamined during the audit.

The Indicators and Performance Measures of the 2005-2009 Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard ® were utilized without modification or substitution. As with the initial certification, SFI Performance Measures and indicators involving wood procurement (Objective 8) were outside of the scope of the Wisconsin DNR's SFI program and were excluded from the scope of the SFI Certification Audit.

Forest Management on Wisconsin State Forests

Source: Wisconsin DNR Web Site: http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/StateForests/sf-timber.htm

"Wisconsin State Forests are managed for multiple-use objectives. Along with recreational objectives, the State Forests are used to demonstrate various forest practices to the public, while meeting a variety of habitat objectives. Resource managers within the Department of Natural Resources use these objectives in conjunction with other demands to manage each state forest as a healthy ecosystem. Each year less than 2 % of the land under state forest ownership is actively managed. Of this 2% over 70% of the management prescriptions are thinnings, which reduce the density of stems to accelerate growth of the remaining trees and vertical structural diversity within the stand harvested. Approximately 30 % of the stands actively managed each year are harvested using regeneration techniques. After harvest these stands are either replanted or regenerate naturally and will continue to grow and produce forests and wood products for future generations. These regenerating forests also provide important habitat for species associated with young forests such as the snowshoe hare and woodcock.

Harvested stands are either regenerated naturally or are planted with seedlings. The determination of which method to use is based on the ability of the site to regenerate naturally and the ability of the desired species to regenerate on a particular site. For example, if a site experiences hot and dry conditions planting may be the best alternative. This is most common for the pine species, especially jack pine.

Even-aged and uneven-aged management schemes are the harvest systems employed on Wisconsin's State Forest. Even-aged management includes clearcuts, clearcuts with reserves, seed tree methods, shelterwood cuttings, and intermediate thinnings. Uneven-aged management includes both individual and group selection techniques. Each of these systems and techniques are designed in conjunction with a particular tree species or community of trees. For example, uneven-aged single tree and group selection techniques are used in northern hardwoods, hemlock-hardwood, and swamp hardwood stands. In contrast, even-aged clearcuts are used in pine (red, white, and jack), paper birch, aspen, oak, northern hardwoods, scrub oak, aspen, fir-spruce, and black spruce stands. The selection of a management system and specific technique depends on many factors including tree composition, age of the stand, location, accessibility, and most importantly the long-term objectives for the stand under consideration."

SFIS Surveillance Audit Process

The review was governed by a detailed audit protocol designed to enable the audit team determine conformance with the applicable SFI requirements. The process included the assembly and review of audit evidence consisting of documents, interviews, and on-site inspections of ongoing or completed forest practices. Documents describing these activities were provided to the auditor in advance, and a sample of the available audit evidence was designated by the auditor for review.

The possible findings for specific SFI requirements included Full Conformance, Major Non-conformance, Minor Non-conformance, Opportunities for Improvement, and Practices that exceeded the Basic Requirements of the SFIS. Surveillance Audits generally focus on conformance issues and do not generally address exceptional practices.

Overview of Audit Findings

Wisconsin DNR's SFI Program was found to be in full conformance with the SFIS Standard. The NSF-ISR SFI Certification Audit Process determined that there were no minor non-conformances. Further, the Wisconsin DNR demonstrated that clearly exceeds the SFI Standard in the following areas:

- *"3.1.4 "Monitoring of overall BMP implementation."* Efforts in BMP monitoring exceed the standard.
- *"4.1.1 Program to promote the conservation of native biological diversity, including species, wildlife habitats, and ecological or natural community types, at stand and landscape levels."* Strong cooperation among the Division of Forestry, Bureau of Endangered Resources, and Wildlife Division has led to an exceptional program for the conservation of native biological diversity.

- "*4.1.3 Plans to locate and protect known sites associated with viable occurrences of critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities.*" The program clearly exceeds the standard in protections afforded rare, threatened, or endangered species or communities.
- 6.1.1 "*Use of existing natural heritage data and expert advice in identifying or selecting sites for protection because of their ecologically, geologically, historically, or culturally important qualities.*" The Wisconsin State Forests exceed the standard in the identification of special sites and their protection and management.
- "*12.2.3 Recreation opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives*" The recreational and educational programs and facilities on state forests are very well designed and maintained, with recreational use given a high priority. Increases in demand for off-road vehicle use absent budget increases may compromise this current program strength.
- "*12.3.2 Appropriate contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal, or independent collaboration.*" DNR's efforts to involve and inform the public regarding management programs are strong and steadily expanding through use of the web, mailings, public meetings, and newsletters.

(Note: Not all indicators were reviewed in the 2007 audit. Indicators not reviewed were not considered for the status "Exceeds the SFI Standard".)

Several opportunities for improvement were also identified. These findings do not indicate a current deficiency, but served to alert Wisconsin DNR about areas that could be strengthened or which could merit future attention. These include:

- Indicator 2.1.2: There is an opportunity to improve tracking of regeneration success.
- Indicator 2.3.5: There is an opportunity to improve the guidelines for retained woody debris to ensure long-term soil productivity is maintained.
- Indicator 9.1.1: There is an opportunity during the master planning process to assess research needs on the Coulee Experimental State Forest to determine future uses.
- Indicator 10.1.3: There is an opportunity to improve training for equipment operators who maintain roads.

Wisconsin DNR has also improved its SFI program as follows:

- The Wisconsin DNR is modernizing the inventory process and related system of analyzing and reporting on forest stand conditions (WISFIRS first module is operating and all foresters have been trained).
- The northern state forests have completed Monitoring and Evaluation Reports for Fiscal Year 2007. These provide summaries of accomplishments and an analysis of plan implementation status.
- Regional Ecologists are on staff in permanent positions. They are playing a role on the individual Forests, providing even more interaction with Bureau of Endangered Resources personnel. Biotic Inventories are being completed for all upcoming Plans
- Streamlined "master planning" processes have been developed and are being implemented.
- New biotic inventories were done for those forests with old plans and foresters are incorporating this information into their ongoing projects.

The SFI Program of the Wisconsin DNR is being audited under the continuous surveillance audit option provided in the SFI requirements. The 2005 and 2006 audits covered all elements of the 2005-2009 Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard®, and as such the program achieved recertification under the continuous surveillance option. The next surveillance audit is scheduled for July 14, 2008.

Relevance of Forestry Certification

Third-party certification provides assurance that forests are being managed under the principles of sustainable forestry, which are described in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard as:

1. Sustainable Forestry
To practice sustainable forestry to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates reforestation and the managing, growing, nurturing, and harvesting of trees for useful products with the conservation of soil, air and water quality, biological diversity, wildlife and aquatic habitat, recreation, and aesthetics.

2. Responsible Practices
To use and to promote among other forest landowners sustainable forestry practices that are both scientifically credible and economically, environmentally, and socially responsible.

3. Reforestation and Productive Capacity
To provide for regeneration after harvest and maintain the productive capacity of the forestland base.

4. Forest Health and Productivity
To protect forests from uncharacteristic and economically or environmentally undesirable wildfire, pests, diseases, and other damaging agents and thus maintain and improve long-term forest health and productivity.

5. Long-Term Forest and Soil Productivity
To protect and maintain long-term forest and soil productivity.

6. Protection of Water Resources
To protect water bodies and riparian zones.

7. Protection of Special Sites and Biological Diversity
To manage forests and lands of special significance (biologically, geologically, historically or culturally important) in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities and to promote a diversity of wildlife habitats, forest types, and ecological or natural community types.

8. Legal Compliance
To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations.

9. Continual Improvement
To continually improve the practice of forest management and also to monitor, measure and report performance in achieving the commitment to sustainable forestry.

Source: Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Standard, 2005–2009 Edition

For Additional Information Contact:

Mike Ferrucci,SFI Program Manager
NSF-International Strategic Registrations
26 Commerce Drive
North Branford, CT 06471
203-887-9248
mferrucci@iforest.com

Robert Mather, Director, Bureau of Forest Management
WI Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 7921,
Madison, WI 53707-7921
(608) 266-1727
Robert.Mather@dnr.state.wi.us

Appendix IV

Audit Matrix

NSF-ISR auditors use this document to record their findings for each SFIS Performance Measure and Indicator.
If a non-conformance is found the auditor shall fully document the reasons on the Corrective Action Request (CAR) form.
N/A in the Auditor column indicates that the associated Performance Measure or Indicator does not apply.
Audit Date: July 2005 Date Code: 5; Audit Date: July 2006 Date Code: 6; Audit Date: July 2007 Date Code: 7

Abbreviations used: BLSF – Black River State Forest; GKSF - Governor Knowles State Forest; CEF - Coulee Experimental Forest; NHAL – Northern Highlands American Legion State Forest;

* Auditor: Ferrucci developed all notes, consulted with Hrubes

Objective 1: To broaden the implementation of sustainable forestry by ensuring long-term harvest levels based on the use of the best scientific information available.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Auditor *	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
1.1	***Program Participants shall ensure that long-term harvest levels are sustainable and consistent with appropriate growth and-yield models and written plans.***		6				
1.1.1	A long-term resource analysis to guide forest management planning at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the operation, including: a. a periodic or ongoing forest inventory; b. a land classification system; c. soils inventory and maps, where available; d. access to growth-and-yield modeling capabilities; e. up-to-date maps or a geographic information system (GIS); f. recommended sustainable harvest levels; and g. a review of nontimber issues (e.g., pilot projects and economic incentive programs to promote water protection, carbon storage, or biological diversity conservation).		5,6,7				
1.1.2	Documentation of annual harvest trends in relation to the sustainable forest management plan.		6, 7				
1.1.3	A forest inventory system and a method to calculate growth.		5, 7				
1.1.4	Periodic updates of inventory and recalculation of planned harvests.		5, 7				
1.1.5	Documentation of forest practices (e.g., planting, fertilization, and thinning) consistent with assumptions in harvest plans.		5, 7				

Objective 2: To ensure long-term forest productivity and conservation of forest resources through prompt reforestation, soil conservation, afforestation and other measures.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
2.1	***Program Participants shall reforest after final harvest, unless delayed for site-specific environmental or forest health considerations, through artificial regeneration within two years or two planting seasons, or by planned natural regeneration methods within five years.***		6, 7				
2.1.1	Designation of all management units for either natural or artificial regeneration.		5,6, 7				
2.1.2	Clear Requirements to judge adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct under-stocked areas and achieve desired species composition and stocking rates for both artificial and natural regeneration		6, 7				7
2.1.3	Minimized plantings of exotic tree species and research documentation that exotic tree species, planted operationally, pose minimal risk.		6, 7				
2.1.4	Protection of desirable or planned advanced natural regeneration during harvest.		5, 7				
2.1.5	Artificial reforestation programs that consider potential ecological impacts of a different species or species mix from that which was harvested.		6, 7				
2.2	***Program Participants shall minimize chemical use required to achieve management objectives while protecting employees, neighbors, the public and the forest environment.***		6				
2.2.1	Minimized chemical use required to achieve management objectives.		6				
2.2.2	Use of least toxic and narrowest spectrum pesticide narrowest spectrum and least toxic pesticides necessary to achieve management objective.		6, 7				
2.2.3	Use of pesticides registered for the intended use and applied in accordance with the label requirements.		6				
2.2.4	Use of Integrated Pest Management where feasible.		6				
2.2.5	Supervision of forest chemical applications by state-trained or certified applicators.		6, 7				
2.2.6	Use of best management practices appropriate to the situation; for example: adjoining landowners or nearby residents notified of applications and chemicals used; appropriate multi-lingual signs or oral warnings used; public road access controlled during and after applications; streamside and other needed buffer strips appropriately designated; positive shut-off and minimal drift spray valves used; drift minimized by aerially applying forest chemicals parallel to buffer zones; water quality monitored or other methods used to assure proper …		6			5	6

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - - FC	EXR	Maj	Min	OFI
2.2.6	…equipment use and stream protection of streams, lakes and other waterbodies; chemicals stored at appropriate locations; state reports filed as required; or methods used to ensure protection of federally listed threatened & endangered species						
2.3	***Program Participants shall implement management practices to protect and maintain forest and soil productivity.***		6				
2.3.1	Use of soils maps where available.		5,6				
2.3.2	Process to identify soils vulnerable to compaction and use of appropriate methods to avoid excessive soil disturbance.		5,6				
2.3.3	Use of erosion control measures to minimize the loss of soil and site productivity.		5,6				
2.3.4	Post-harvest conditions conducive to maintaining site productivity (e.g., limited rutting, retained down woody debris, minimized skid trails).		5,6, 7				7
2.3.5	Retention of vigorous trees during partial harvesting, consistent with silvicultural norms for the area.		5,6,7				
2.3.6	Criteria that address harvesting and site preparation to protect soil productivity.		5,6				
2.3.7	Minimized road construction to meet management objectives efficiently.		5,7				
2.4	***Program Participants shall manage so as to protect forests from damaging agents such as environmentally or economically undesirable wildfire, pests and diseases to maintain and improve long-term forest health, productivity and economic viability.***		6, 7				
2.4.1	Program to protect forests from damaging agents.		6, 7				
2.4.2	Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to minimize susceptibility to damaging agents.		5,6, 7				
2.4.3	Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control programs.		6,7				
2.5	***Program Participants that utilize genetically improved planting stock including those derived through biotechnology shall use sound scientific methods and follow all applicable laws and other internationally applicable protocols.***		6, 7				
2.5.1	Program for appropriate research, testing, evaluation and deployment of genetically improved planting stock including trees derived through biotechnology.		6,7				

Objective 3: To protect water quality in streams, lakes and other water bodies.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
3.1	***Program Participants shall meet or exceed all applicable federal, provincial, state and local water quality laws and meet or exceed Best Management Practices developed under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved state water quality programs other applicable federal, provincial, state or local programs.***		6,7				
3.1.1	Program to implement state or provincial equivalent BMPs during all phases of management activities.		6,7				5
3.1.2	Contract provisions that specify BMP compliance.		5, 7				
3.1.3	Plans that address wet weather events (e.g., inventory systems, wet weather tracts, defining acceptable operational conditions, etc.).		6				
3.1.4	Monitoring of overall BMP implementation.		5,7	7			
3.2	***Program Participant shall have or develop, implement, and document, riparian protection measures based on soil type, terrain, vegetation and other applicable factors.***		6				
3.2.1	Program addressing management and protection of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones.		6, 7				
3.2.2	Mapping of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones, and where appropriate, identification on the ground.		6, 7				
3.2.3	Implementation of plans to manage or protect streams, lakes and other water bodies.		5,6,7				
3.2.4	Identification and protection of nonforested wetlands, including bogs, fens, vernal pools and marshes of significant size.		5,6				
3.2.5	Where regulations or BMPs do not currently exist to protect riparian areas, use of experts to identify appropriate protection measures.		5, 6, 7				

Objective 4: **Manage the quality and distribution of wildlife habitats and contribute to the conservation of biological diversity by developing and implementing stand- and landscape- level measures that promote habitat diversity and the conservation of forest plants and animals including aquatic fauna.**

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
4.1	***Program participants shall have programs to promote biological diversity at stand- and landscape- scales.***		6, 7				
4.1.1	Program to promote the conservation of native biological diversity, including species, wildlife habitats, and ecological or natural community types, at stand and landscape levels.		5,6	7			
4.1.2	Program to protect threatened and endangered species.		5,6,7				
4.1.3	Plans to locate and protect known sites associated with viable occurrences of critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities. Plans for protection may be developed independently or collaboratively and may include Program Participant management, cooperation with other stakeholders, or use of easements, conservation land sales, exchanges, or other conservation strategies		5	6, 7			
4.1.4	Development and implementation of criteria, as guided by regionally appropriate science, for retention of stand-level wildlife habitat elements (e.g., snags, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees, nest trees).		5, 7				6
4.1.5	Assessment, conducted individually or collaboratively, of forest cover types and habitats at the individual ownership level and, where credible data are available, across the landscape, and incorporation of findings into planning and management activities, where practical and when consistent with management objectives.		6	7			
4.1.6	Support of and participation in plans or programs for the conservation of old-growth forests in the region of ownership.		6, 7				
4.1.7	Participation in programs and demonstration of activities as appropriate to limit the introduction, impact, and spread of invasive exotic plants and animals that directly threaten or are likely to threaten native plant and animal communities.		6,7				
4.1.8	Program to incorporate the role of prescribed or natural fire where appropriate.		5,6,7				
4.2	***Program Participants shall apply knowledge gained through research, science, technology, and field experience to manage wildlife habitat and contribute to the conservation of biological diversity.***		6,7				
4.2.1	Collection of information on critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities and other biodiversity-related data through forest inventory processes, mapping, or participation in external programs, such as NatureServe, state or provincial heritage programs, or other credible systems. Such participation may include providing nonproprietary scientific information, time, and assistance by staff, or in-kind or direct financial support.		6,7				

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
4.2.2	A methodology to incorporate research results and field applications of biodiversity and ecosystem research into forest management decisions.		5,6,7				

Objective 5: To manage the visual impact of harvesting and other forest operations.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
5.1	***Program Participants shall manage the impact of harvesting on visual quality.***		6, 7				
5.1.1	Program to address visual quality management.		5,6,7				
5.1.2	Incorporation of aesthetic considerations in harvesting, road, landing design and management, and other management activities where visual impacts are a concern.		5,6,7				
5.2	***Program Participants shall manage the size, shape, and placement of clearcut harvests.***		6				
5.2.1	Average size of clearcut harvest areas does not exceed 120 acres, except when necessary to respond to forest health emergencies or other natural catastrophes.		5,6,7				
5.2.2	Documentation through internal records of clearcut size and the process for calculating average size.		6				
5.3	***Program Participants shall adopt a green-up requirement or alternative methods that provide for visual quality.***		6,7				
5.3.1	Program implementing the green-up requirement or alternative methods.		5,6,7				
5.3.2	Harvest area tracking system to demonstrate compliance with the green-up requirement or alternative methods.		6,7				
5.3.3	Trees in clearcut harvest areas are at least 3 years old or 5 feet high at the desired level of stocking before adjacent areas are clearcut, or as appropriate to address operational and economic considerations, alternative methods to reach the performance measure are utilized by the Program Participant.		5,6,7				

Objective 6: To manage Program Participant lands that are ecologically, geologically, historically, or culturally important in a manner that recognizes their special qualities.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
6.1.	***Program Participants shall identify special sites and manage them in a manner appropriate for their unique features.***		6,7				
6.1.1	Use of existing natural heritage data and expert advice in identifying or selecting sites for protection because of their ecologically, geologically, historically, or culturally important qualities.		5	6,7			
6.1.2	Appropriate mapping, cataloging, and management of identified special sites.		5,6,7				

Objective 7: To promote the efficient use of forest resources.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
7.1	***Program Participants shall employ appropriate forest harvesting technology and "in-woods" manufacturing processes and practices to minimize waste and ensure efficient utilization of harvested trees, where consistent with other SFI Standard objectives.***		6, 7				
7.1.1	Program or monitoring system to ensure efficient utilization, which may include provisions to ensure a. landings left clean with little waste; b. residues distributed to add organic and nutrient value to future forests; c. training or incentives to encourage loggers to enhance utilization; d. cooperation with mill managers for better utilization of species and low-grade material; e. merchandizing of harvested material to ensure use for its most beneficial purpose; f. development of markets for underutilized species and low-grade wood; g. periodic inspections and reports noting utilization and product separation; or h. exploration of alternative markets (e.g., energy markets).		5,6, 7				

Objective 8: To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry through procurement programs. Not Applicable

Objective 9: To improve forestry research, science, and technology, upon which sound forest management decisions are based.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
9.1	***Program Participants shall individually, through cooperative efforts, or through associations provide in-kind support or funding, in addition to that generated through taxes, for forest research to improve the health, productivity, and management of forest resources.***		6				
9.1.1	Current financial or in-kind support of research to address questions of relevance in the region of operations. The research will include some or all of the following issues: a. forest health, productivity, and ecosystem functions; b. chemical efficiency, use rate, and integrated pest management; c. water quality; d. wildlife management at stand or landscape levels; e. conservation of biological diversity; and f. effectiveness of BMPs.		5 (only part a. reviewed), 6 (all), 7				7
9.2	***Program Participants shall individually, through cooperative efforts, or through associations develop or use state, provincial, or regional analyses in support of their sustainable forestry programs.***		6				
9.2.1	Participation, individually or through cooperative efforts or associations at the state, provincial, or regional level, in the development or use of a. regeneration assessments; b. growth-and-drain assessments; c. BMP implementation and compliance; and d. biodiversity conservation information for family forest owners.		5, 6 a, b	5, 6 (c. and d. exceeds)			

Objective 10: To improve the practice of sustainable forest management by resource professionals, logging professionals, and contractors through appropriate training and education programs.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
10.1	***Program Participants shall require appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities under the SFI Standard.***		6				
10.1.1	Written statement of commitment to the SFI Standard communicated throughout the organization, particularly to mill and woodland managers, wood procurement staff, and field foresters.		5, 6,7				
10.1.2	Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving SFI Standard objectives.		5, 6,7				
10.1.3	Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.		5, 6,7				6,7
10.1.4	Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.		5, 6, 7				
10.2	***Program Participants shall work closely with state logging or forestry associations, or appropriate agencies or others in the forestry community, to foster improvement in the professionalism of wood producers.***		7	6			
10.2.1	Participation in or support of SFI Implementation Committees to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for wood producers' training courses that address a. awareness of sustainable forestry principles and the SFI Program; b. BMPs, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance, & retirement; c. regeneration, forest resource conservation, and aesthetics; d. awareness of responsibilities under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, the Canadian Species at Risk Act, and other measures to protect wildlife habitat; e. logging safety; f. U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations, wage and hour rules, and other employment laws; g. transportation issues; h. business management; and i. public policy and outreach.		5, 7	6			

Objective 11: Commitment to comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, or local laws and regulations.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
11.1	***Program Participants shall take appropriate steps to comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws and regulations.***		6				
11.1.1	Access to relevant laws and regulations in appropriate locations.		6				
11.1.2	System to achieve compliance with applicable federal, provincial, state, or local laws and regulations.		6				
11.1.3	Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through available regulatory action information.		6				
11.1.4	Adherence to all applicable federal, state, & provincial regulations and international protocols for research & deployment of trees derived from improved planting stock & biotechnology.						
11.2	***Program Participants shall take appropriate steps to comply with all applicable social laws at the federal, provincial, state, and local levels in the country in which the Program Participant operates.***		6				
11.2.1	Written policy demonstrating commitment to comply with social laws, such as those covering civil rights, equal employment opportunities, antidiscrimination and anti-harassment measures, workers' compensation, indigenous peoples' rights, workers' and communities' right to know, prevailing wages, workers' right to organize, and occupational health and safety.		5, 6				

Objective 12: To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry by encouraging the public and forestry community to participate in the commitment to sustainable forestry and publicly report progress.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
12.1	***Program Participants shall support and promote efforts by consulting foresters, state and federal agencies, state or local groups, professional societies, and the American Tree Farm System® and other landowner cooperative programs to apply principles of sustainable forest management.***		6				
12.1.1	Support for efforts of SFI Implementation Committees.		5, 6, 7				
12.1.2	Support for the development and distribution of educational materials, including information packets for use with forest landowners.		5, 6				
12.1.3	Support for the development and distribution of regional or statewide information materials that provide landowners with practical approaches for addressing biological diversity issues, such as specific wildlife habitat, critically imperiled or imperiled species, and threatened and endangered species.		5, 6				
12.1.4	Participation in efforts to support or promote conservation of working forests through voluntary market-based incentive programs (e.g., current-use taxation programs, Forest Legacy, or conservation easements).		5, 6				
12.1.5	Program Participants are knowledgeable about credible regional conservation planning and priority-setting efforts that include a broad range of stakeholders. Consider the results of these efforts in planning where practical and consistent with management objectives.		5, 6				
12.2	***Program Participants shall support and promote, at the state, provincial or other appropriate levels, mechanisms for public outreach, education, and involvement related to forest management.***		6				
12.2.1	Support for the SFI Implementation Committee program to address outreach, education, and technical assistance (e.g., toll-free numbers, public sector technical assistance programs).		5, 6, 7				
12.2.2	Periodic educational opportunities promoting sustainable forestry, such as a. field tours, seminars, or workshops; b. educational trips; c. self-guided forest management trails; or d. publication of articles, educational pamphlets, or newsletters; or e. support for state, provincial, and local forestry organizations and soil and water conservation districts.		6				
12.2.3	Recreation opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.			5, 6, 7			

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit -or	- - - Indicate Only One - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
12.3	***Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall participate in the development of public land planning and management processes.***		6				
12.3.1	Involvement in public land planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public.		5, 6, 7				
12.3.2	Appropriate contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal, or independent collaboration.			5, 6, 7			
12.4	***Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall confer with affected indigenous peoples.***		6, 7				
12.4.1	Program that includes communicating with affected indigenous peoples to enable Program Participants to a. understand and respect traditional forest related knowledge; b. identify and protect spiritually, historically, or culturally important sites; and c. address the sustainable use of nontimber forest products of value to indigenous peoples in areas where Program Participants have management responsibilities on public lands.		5, 6, 7				
12.5	***Program Participants shall establish, at the state, provincial, or other appropriate levels, procedures to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, the public, or Program Participants regarding practices that appear inconsistent with the SFI Standard principles and objectives.***		6				
12.5.1	Support for SFI Implementation Committee efforts (toll-free numbers and other efforts) to address concerns about apparent nonconforming practices.		6, 7				
12.5.2	Process to receive and respond to public inquiries.		6				
12.6	***Program Participants shall report annually to the SFI Program on their compliance with the SFI Standard.***		6				
12.6.1*	Prompt response to the SFI annual progress report. (*Note: This indicator will be reviewed in all audits.)		5, 6, 7				
12.6.2	Recordkeeping for all the categories of information needed for SFI annual progress reports.		5, 6				
12.6.3	Maintenance of copies of past reports to document progress and improvements to demonstrate conformance to the SFI Standard		5, 6				

Objective 13: To promote continual improvement in the practice of sustainable forestry and monitor, measure, and report performance in achieving the commitment to sustainable forestry.

Performance Measure/ Indicator		Audit-or	- - - *Indicate Only One* - - -				OFI
			FC	EXR	Maj	Min	
13.1*	***Program Participants shall establish a management review system to examine findings and progress in implementing the SFI Standard, to make appropriate improvements in programs, and to inform their employees of changes.*** (*This Performance Measure will be reviewed in all audits.)		6,7				
13.1.1	System to review commitments, programs, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.		5, 6,7				
13.1.2	System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving SFI Standard objectives and performance measures.		5, 6,7				
13.1.3	Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve SFI conformance.		5, 6,7				

Auditor Notes (Note to Auditors: The requirements are repeated here {in part or fully} to facilitate the use of this form. The Lead Auditor may choose to delete the requirement partially or fully to shorten the document, and/or to remove any requirements listed above as being "Not Applicable". The full requirements are listed in the first section of the matrix above, which is not to be so edited.)

Requirement	Notes
1.1	***"Program Participants shall ensure that long-term harvest levels are sustainable and consistent with appropriate growth and-yield models and written plans."***
1.1.1	"A long-term resource analysis to guide forest management planning at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the operation, including: a periodic or ongoing forest inventory; b. a land classification system; c. soils inventory and maps, where available; d. access to growth-and-yield modeling capabilities; e. up-to-date maps or a geographic information system (GIS); f. recommended sustainable harvest levels; and g. a review of nontimber issues (e.g., pilot projects and economic incentive programs to promote water protection, carbon storage, or biological diversity conservation)." • Recent Master Plans (for BRSF and NHAL), in combination with other management tools such as RECON, GIS, etc, include all required items. The other forests have plans of varying ages from recently completed assessments used to revise plans to plans completed over twenty years ago. The older plans have been updated periodically with amendments or variances for specific issues or changes. • Black River State Forest's Master Plan is in early stages of an update; assessments of resources are complete, and were used as part of the issue identification stage that involved the public; currently management alternatives are being developed in a process that includes biologists, botanists, ecologists, and other specialists. • Governor Knowles State Forest is also starting to revise its Master Plan. Reviewed the assessment summary document "Rapid Ecological Assessment for the Coulee Experimental Forest, La Crosse County, WI: A Summary of Biodiversity Values Focusing on Rare Plants, High-quality Natural Communities and Select Rare Animals in Preparation for Master Planning • Ecological Context; Rare Species and High Quality Natural Communities; Management Considerations and Opportunities for Biodiversity Conservation for the Coulee Experimental Forest; Site-specific Opportunities for Biodiversity Conservation
1.1.2	"Documentation of annual harvest trends in relation to the sustainable forest management plan." • Harvest levels are tracked and the new WISFIRS (Wisconsin Forest Inventory and Reporting System) system provides easy access to a variety of reports including updated harvest levels (resource need, allowable harvest averaging backlog, etc.) • Harvest levels at Governor Knowles and Black River State Forest are consistent with the plan; both forests are making progress in working through past backlogs. • Harvest levels for all state forests are reported to legislature; reviewed recent reports and confirmed documentation.
1.1.3 1.1.4	"A forest inventory system and a method to calculate growth." "Periodic updates of inventory and recalculation of planned harvests." • Confirmed that significant progress is being made on RECON; goal is to complete inventories for all state owned forestlands (including state forests and other DNR-administered land categories) before the end of 2008 •
1.1.5	"Documentation of forest practices (e.g., planting, fertilization, and thinning) consistent with assumptions in harvest plans." • Confirmed by review of timbersale documentation and other records, and by review of compiled reports generated by WISFIRS that management practices are being conducted to support the assumptions of growth models and harvest scheduling.

2.1	***"Program Participants shall reforest after final harvest, unless delayed for site-specific environmental or forest health considerations, through artificial regeneration within two years or two planting seasons, or by planned natural regeneration methods within five years."***
2.1.1	"Designation of all management units for either natural or artificial regeneration." • Confirmed by review of timber sale documentation that all harvest units are designated for either natural or artificial regeneration.
2.1.2	"Clear Requirements to judge adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct under-stocked areas and achieve desired species composition and stocking rates for both artificial and natural regeneration." There is an opportunity to improve tracking of regeneration success. • Harvest planning and regeneration surveys, in conjunction with DNR Manual Codes, are designed to provide clear criteria to assess regeneration. Interviews and review of field sites and documents confirm that appropriate actions are taken to ensure good natural regeneration. Efforts and systems to monitor results appear to vary between various state forests, and there is concern about the system's consistency with respect to correcting under-stocked areas. Planting and natural regeneration projects reviewed were carefully planned and implemented.
2.1.3	"Minimized plantings of exotic tree species and research documentation that exotic tree species, planted operationally, pose minimal risk." • Interview confirmed that the following native trees are planted at the three state nurseries: red oak, black walnut, white pine, red pine, jack pine, and larch.
2.1.4	"Protection of desirable or planned advanced natural regeneration during harvest." • Confirmed the protection of desirable or planned advanced natural regeneration during harvest by field observations at sites visited.. This is accomplished by the use of trained loggers, by provisions in logging contracts, by supervision by trained foresters, and occasionally by contractual provisions limiting harvesting to periods when small tree seedlings would be expected to be protected by deep snow cover.
2.1.5	"Artificial reforestation programs that consider potential ecological impacts of a different species or species mix from that which was harvested." • Plantings intended to change species composition are based on review of soil and site characteristics, successional trends, landscape patterns, and information regarding historic composition. Decisions are reviewed by specialists as warranted, for example in unusual stands or sites.
2.2	***"Program Participants shall minimize chemical use required to achieve management objectives while protecting employees, neighbors, the public and the forest environment."***
2.2.2	"Use of least toxic and narrowest spectrum pesticide narrowest spectrum and least toxic pesticides necessary to achieve management objective." • Interviews confirmed that Round-up is often used; otherwise low toxicity chemicals are chosen.
2.2.5	"Supervision of forest chemical applications by state-trained or certified applicators." • Confirmed through interviews at each state forest visited.
2.3	***"Program Participants shall implement management practices to protect and maintain forest and soil productivity."***

2.3.1	"Use of soils maps where available." •
2.3.2	"Process to identify soils vulnerable to compaction and use of appropriate methods to avoid excessive soil disturbance." •
2.3.3	"Use of erosion control measures to minimize the loss of soil and site productivity." •
2.3.4	"Post-harvest conditions conducive to maintaining site productivity (e.g., limited rutting, retained down woody debris, minimized skid trails)." <u>There is an opportunity to improve the guidelines for retained woody debris to ensure long-term soil productivity is maintained.</u> • Confirmed by field observations at most sites visited that significant woody debris is retained. Some sites (whole-tree chipping) had little such residue. • Guidelines are incomplete regarding site-specific retention required to sustain forest productivity. • There is a gap in guidelines for retention considering nutrient implications of increasing the proportion of wood removed from forests. This concern is based on continuing discussions of Wisconsin's efforts towards energy independence (Friday, July 7, 2006 Governor Doyle, Industry, Environmental, and Education Leaders Sign Wisconsin's "Declaration of Energy Independence" Launches Broad, Statewide Effort to Make Wisconsin America's Renewable Energy Leader: GREEN BAY – Governor Jim Doyle, joined by University of Wisconsin System President Kevin Reilly and other industry and environmental leaders, today signed Wisconsin's "Declaration of Energy Independence" – setting broad, ambitious goals for the state to become the nation's leader in the drive toward energy independence. The Governor also announced a comprehensive effort to achieve those goals, including grant funding, incentives for research, support for ethanol and other biofuels, and a new initiative to make several University of Wisconsin campuses 100 percent energy independent within five years…)
2.3.5	"Retention of vigorous trees during partial harvesting, consistent with silvicultural norms for the area.." • Field observations at all partial harvest sites visited confirmed the retention of vigorous trees. Some but not all foresters are aware of cutting-edge silvicultural recommendations.
2.3.6	"Criteria that address harvesting and site preparation to protect soil productivity." •
2.3.7	"Minimized road construction to meet management objectives efficiently." • Roads observed were well designed and maintained. Road system appears sufficient to meet objectives; few new roads are built or needed.
2.4	***"Program Participants shall manage so as to protect forests from damaging agents such as environmentally or economically undesirable wildfire, pests and diseases to maintain and improve long-term forest health, productivity and economic viability."***
2.4.1 2.4.2	"Program to protect forests from damaging agents." "Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to minimize susceptibility to damaging agents." • The forestry program, including scheduled treatments to maintain vigorous stands and

	monitoring of forests susceptible to known pest epidemics, ensures that forests are protected from damaging agents. Although some Jack pine stands have been grown past recommended rotations foresters, aided by pest specialists, pay close attention to these stands and generally harvest them before mortality is apparent. Foresters use habitat typing to ensure appropriate species and species composition are encouraged, managed, maintained, and/or regenerated. Silviculture Handbook includes extensive recommendations for forest health.
2.4.3	"Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control programs." • Confirmed strong fire control programs. Many foresters have fire control credentials and responsibilities.
2.5	***"Program Participants that utilize genetically improved planting stock including those derived through biotechnology shall use sound scientific methods and follow all applicable laws and other internationally applicable protocols."***
2.5.1	"Program for appropriate research, testing, evaluation and deployment of genetically improved planting stock including trees derived through biotechnology." • Confirmed the state's tree improvement program is designed and managed by properly trained specialists. The program ranges from wild collected seed to first and second (one and a half) generation seed orchards. Records are kept of seed sources and outplanting.
3.1	**"Program Participants shall meet or exceed all applicable federal, provincial, state and local water quality laws and meet or exceed Best Management Practices developed under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved state water quality programs other applicable federal, provincial, state or local programs."**
3.1.1	"Program to implement state or provincial equivalent BMPs during all phases of management activities." • Continued strong and effective program for ensuring that harvests are designed and implemented in accordance with Wisconsin Best Management Practices.
3.1.2	"Contract provisions that specify BMP compliance." • Confirmed that all contracts specify BMPs in accordance with Wisconsin Best Management Practices.
3.1.3	"Plans that address wet weather events (e.g., inventory systems, wet weather tracts, defining acceptable operational conditions, etc)." •
3.1.4	"Monitoring of overall BMP implementation." • The state's hydrologist has completed an analysis of the effects of the revised rutting policy, confirming it is effectively protecting against soil degradation, with an emphasis on erosion, rutting, and soil compaction.
3.2	***"Program Participant shall have or develop, implement, and document, riparian protection measures based on soil type, terrain, vegetation and other applicable factors."***
3.2.1	"Program addressing management and protection of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones." • Confirmed that this program continues to operate effectively.
3.2.2	"Mapping of streams, lakes and other water bodies and riparian zones, and where appropriate, identification on the ground."

	• Confirmed these are mapped and marked on the ground as appropriate.
3.2.3	"Implementation of plans to manage or protect streams, lakes and other water bodies." • Confirmed by field observations at sites visited that wetlands and riparian zones are protected.
3.2.5	"Where regulations or BMPs do not currently exist to protect riparian areas, use of experts to identify appropriate protection measures." • N.A.; BMPs do exist.
4.1	***"Program participants shall have programs to promote biological diversity at stand- and landscape- scales."***
4.1.1	"Program to promote the conservation of native biological diversity, including species, wildlife habitats, and ecological or natural community types, at stand and landscape levels." The close cooperation between the Division of Forestry and the Bureau of Endangered Resources and the Wildlife Division has led to an exceptional program for the conservation of native biological diversity. • Field observations, interviews, and review of documents confirm an exceptional program for the conservation of native biological diversity. Managers take exceptional care to understand the diversity of treated stands, to consult with specialists as needed, and to follow any recommendations made to adjust silvicultural methods or harvesting approaches to ensure protections as needed. • There is a high level of cooperation between state forest managers and Bureau of Endangered Resources personnel, who are an important part of the biodiversity program. On all foresters BER folks are being kept in the loop and are requested to attend annual work planning meetings to bring up concerns for the next years project work. Projects with high importance to BER that are routinely being incorporated into annual work plans (i.e. prairie management). • Management planning incorporates biological information. BER has a critical role: "streamlined" processes going on for the "next" plans and that the new planning processes will not have the whole package of biological information that were available, and well used, for the two most recent plans, although most regional ecology reports will be compiled. Most of the work on these background reports are being done by individuals rather than teams as happened in the past. • Interviews confirmed that biotic inventories were completed or updated for those forests with old plans and foresters are incorporating this information into their ongoing projects.
4.1.2	"Program to protect threatened and endangered species." • Efforts to protect RTE species are superb. Confirmed implementation of survey protocols for KBB based on the ITP in the HCP.
4.1.3	"Plans to locate and protect known sites associated with viable occurrences of critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities. Plans for protection may be developed independently or collaboratively and may include Program Participant management, cooperation with other stakeholders, or use of easements, conservation land sales, exchanges, or other conservation strategies." The program clearly exceeds the standard in protections afforded rare, threatened, or endangered species or communities. • Biotic inventories, State Natural Areas and other efforts are made to add to existing information by seeking previously unknown rare, threatened, endangered species and communities or special sites. • The Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) program is managed by the Wisconsin DNR's Bureau of Endangered Resources (BER) and is consulted by

	foresters and others as part of master planning and timber sale preparation. BER staff work closely with foresters on management planning and decision-making. • Assessments are conducted for a wide variety of uncommon species, including federally and state-listed rare, threatened, and endangered species and communities, which exceeds the requirement for G1 and G2 species. • Confirmed that biotic inventories have been conducted in advance of completed or pending Master Plans including for the Coulee and Governor Knowles State Forests. • Reviewed the assessment summary document "Rapid Ecological Assessment for the Coulee Experimental Forest, La Crosse County, WI: A Summary of Biodiversity Values Focusing on Rare Plants, High-quality Natural Communities and Select Rare Animals in Preparation for Master Planning. Chapters Include: "Ecological Context; Rare Species and High Quality Natural Communities; Management Considerations and Opportunities for Biodiversity Conservation for the Coulee Experimental Forest; Site-specific Opportunities for Biodiversity Conservation."
4.1.4	"Development and implementation of criteria, as guided by regionally appropriate science, for retention of stand-level wildlife habitat elements (e.g., snags, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees, nest trees)." • In partial harvests retention of snags, down woody debris, and trees with a range of sizes, with provisions for regeneration of all appropriate species, were clearly demonstrated. For clearcuts and shelterwood harvests dispersed and aggregate retention were commonly seen, although somewhat limited in Jack Pine stands for operational and ecological reasons (burns for site preparation and complete cutting in response to Jack Pine Budworm on the need for open conditions to stimulate the opening of serotinous cones, for example). Retention trees in both categories of harvests (partial or complete/heavy) were either marked with green paint or designated by species (for example, "retain all pine …"). • There was an OFI issued in 2006; no change in the program; however, Wisconsin is supporting additional training for foresters.
4.1.5	"Assessment, conducted individually or collaboratively, of forest cover types and habitats at the individual ownership level and, where credible data are available, across the landscape, and incorporation of findings into planning and management activities, where practical and when consistent with management objectives." • See 4.1.7 above. The report referenced there also includes an appendix "State Natural Areas and Other Ecological Reference Sites in La Crosse and Vernon Counties" confirming one aspect of the assessment at the landscape scale. • The forest management programs of the Wisconsin DNR (on state forests and on other lands administered by the Lands Division) are increasingly being managed in a coordinated fashion while trying to meet forest cover type and habitat goals across the landscape. The Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan, completed in 2006, serves as an important tool in these efforts, which are manifest most clearly in ongoing Master Planning efforts.
4.1.6	"Support of and participation in plans or programs for the conservation of old-growth forests in the region of ownership." • Reserves or old-growth management occur on nearly all of the forests.
4.1.7	"Participation in programs and demonstration of activities as appropriate to limit the introduction, impact, and spread of invasive exotic plants and animals that directly threaten or are likely to threaten native plant and animal communities." • Significant efforts are being made to identify problem areas of invasive plants and pests (gypsy moth). An inventory for invasive plants is underway in the northern region state forests (NHAL, Brule, Flambeau) led by the Northern Regional Ecologist, BER. Resources to deal with this problem are increasing but still

	inadequate.
4.1.8	"Program to incorporate the role of prescribed or natural fire where appropriate." • Efforts to incorporate prescribed fire are always done appropriately; more opportunities exist than current resources allow for; state lands including state forests are leaders in this area. Although the use of fire is increasing, budget and staffing constraints limit this to levels below those considered optimal.
4.2	***"Program Participants shall apply knowledge gained through research, science, technology, and field experience to manage wildlife habitat and contribute to the conservation of biological diversity."***
4.2.1	"Collection of information on critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities and other biodiversity-related data through forest inventory processes, mapping, or participation in external programs, such as NatureServe, state or provincial heritage programs, or other credible systems. Such participation may include providing nonproprietary scientific information, time, and assistance by staff, or in-kind or direct financial support." • Biotic inventories are conducted by contractors and by BOR staff in advance of all new forest plans (see 4.1.3 above). • Early successional forest bird monitoring continues. • Foresters report any unusual plant or animal to specialists.
4.2.2	"A methodology to incorporate research results and field applications of biodiversity and ecosystem research into forest management decisions." • Wisconsin DNR employs professional biologists, ecologists, foresters, and others who are trained and experienced in managing terrestrial ecosystems to maintain diversity. Interviews confirmed that these professionals maintain their knowledge by attending, and often presenting, at local, regional, and national scientific conferences and meetings. • DNR is directly involved in research in a variety of subject areas. • Interviews confirmed that regular, effective interdisciplinary review (annual or more frequent formal meetings, and very regular less formal joint reviews) takes place in all of the state forests.
5.1	***"Program Participants shall manage the impact of harvesting on visual quality."***
5.1.1	"Program to address visual quality management." • Harvests planned by trained foresters and reviewed by recreation specialists when needed, as well as by experienced supervisory foresters.
5.1.2	"Incorporation of aesthetic considerations in harvesting, road, landing design and management, and other management activities where visual impacts are a concern." • Sales are modified along lake shores, highways, trails, etc. Special areas are designated for scenic priority management. • Completed harvest sites visited had clean landings, good utilization, and incorporated other visual management techniques.
5.2	***"Program Participants shall manage the size, shape, and placement of clearcut harvests."***
5.2.1	"Average size of clearcut harvest areas does not exceed 120 acres, except when necessary to respond to forest health emergencies or other natural catastrophes." • No large (over 120 acres) clearcuts were seen during the audit.

5.3	***"Program Participants shall adopt a green-up requirement or alternative methods that provide for visual quality."***
5.3.1 5.3.2 5.3.3	"Program implementing the green-up requirement or alternative methods." "Harvest area tracking system to demonstrate compliance with the green-up requirement or alternative methods." "Trees in clearcut harvest areas are at least 3 years old or 5 feet high at the desired level of stocking before adjacent areas are clearcut, or as appropriate to address operational and economic considerations, alternative methods to reach the performance measure are utilized by the Program Participant." • Green-up requirements do not apply in most hardwood harvests, which use selection or shelterwood methods (no clearcuts). Aspen, regenerated by coppice systems (root suckering), are normally are at least 5 feet high within a single growing season, or at most two seasons. Pine clearcuts are the focus of green-up. Confirmed intensive efforts to regenerate Jack Pine (which can be difficult on some sites) including various types of site preparation, natural seeding, or planting. Field sites visited confirmed that sites meet green up before adjacent sites are harvested. Exceptions to green up would be allowed for forest pest situations (e.g. Jack Pine Budworm). Harvest areas are tracked through GIS system.
6.1.	***"Program Participants shall identify special sites and manage them in a manner appropriate for their unique features."***
6.1.1	"Use of existing natural heritage data and expert advice in identifying or selecting sites for protection because of their ecologically, geologically, historically, or culturally important qualities." <u>The Wisconsin State Forests exceed the standard in the identification of special sites and their protection and management.</u> • Biotic inventories, State Natural Areas and other efforts are made to add to existing information by seeking previously unknown rare, threatened, endangered species and communities or special sites. • Wisconsin Manual Code 1810.1 requires screening for potential archaeological and historic sites prior to initiating most management or development activities, including timber harvests and development of recreation sites. The management of designated State Natural Areas in the northern region is assigned to DNR foresters, as the Bureau of Endangered Resources (BOR) did not have field staff until the recent creation of the Regional Ecologist positions, which have been made permanent (five permanent Regional Ecologist positions). • Master plans devote considerable attention to the role of special sites and their management. Wisconsin DNR clearly exceeds the standard by going beyond use of existing data to seek new sites, and then manages all species sites appropriately.
6.1.2	"Appropriate mapping, cataloging, and management of identified special sites." • NHI and other records in forestry and BER files clearly identify such sites and/or the management provisions being utilized for manage special sites.
7.1	***"Program Participants shall employ appropriate forest harvesting technology and "in-woods" manufacturing processes and practices to minimize waste and ensure efficient utilization of harvested trees, where consistent with other SFI Standard objectives."***
7.1.1	"Program or monitoring system to ensure efficient utilization, which may include..." • Field observations at all sites visited confirmed good to excellent utilization. Confirmed through interviews and prior auditor knowledge that excellent markets

	exist for nearly all species and grades present on WI State Forests. Most harvests are conducted using mechanical harvesters, which has led to good utilization. • The state is working to develop biomass markets.
Objective 8	Not applicable (applies only to organizations procuring timber from other lands to supply a mill or processing facility).
9.1	***"Program Participants shall individually, through cooperative efforts, or through associations provide in-kind support or funding, in addition to that generated through taxes, for forest research to improve the health, productivity, & management of forest resources."***
9.1.1	"Current financial or in-kind support of research to address questions of relevance in the region of operations. The research will include …" There is an opportunity to increase research use of the Coulee Experimental Forest. • Coulee Experimental Forest is available for research; some short-term studies are conducted here, but most of the work was done by the USDA Forest Service prior to 1975.
10.1	***"Program Participants shall require appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities under the SFI Standard."***
10.1.1	"Written statement of commitment to the SFI Standard communicated throughout the organization, particularly to mill and woodland managers, wood procurement staff, and field foresters." • Commitment is documented; all staff encountered were aware of certification.
10.1.2	"Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving SFI Standard objectives." • A "Forest Certification Assessment Team Leader" position has been created and filled, ensuring that certification roles and responsibilities are well known and implemented. • All staff encountered are aware of certification.
10.1.3	"Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities." There is an opportunity to improve training for equipment operators who maintain roads. • Professional staff have strong educational backgrounds and ample opportunities to obtain regular continuing education. Interviews confirmed that recently hired foresters and specialists receive ample training, including thorough formal training designed for new employees and on-going continuing education tied to annual performance reviews and work planning (thus tied to job responsibilities). • Equipment operators working on new drainage structures in forest roads are supervised closely by foresters, so extensive training is not required. There was no evidence of problems with road maintenance (grading) but road maintenance staff are not routinely trained in road BMPs (some may be, but it is not through a formal job function requirement).
10.1.4	"Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities." • Confirmed that WI DNR requires SFI training of all contractors for contracts effective after 1-1-06. Training requirements were listed in timber sale contracts, and tract files contained copies of logger training certificates.
10.2	***"Program Participants shall work closely with state logging or forestry associations, or appropriate agencies or others in the forestry community, to foster improvement in the***

	professionalism of wood producers."
10.2.1 12.1.1, 12.2.1, and 12.5.1	"Participation in or support of SFI Implementation Committees to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for wood producers' training courses…" Note: Indicators 10.2.1, 12.1.1, 12.2.1, and 12.5.1 all relate to SFI Implementation Committee activities. Description of evidence is included here for all of these indicators • Paul Pingrey, Forest Certification Assessment Team Leader, attends Wisconsin SIC meetings and participates actively in a range of activities. (Note: this issue was not assessed in sufficient detail to consider a finding of "Exceeds the Standard" for 2007.)
12.1	***"Program Participants shall support and promote efforts by consulting foresters, state and federal agencies, state or local groups, professional societies, and the American Tree Farm System® and other landowner cooperative programs to apply principles of sustainable forest management."***
12.1.1	"Support for efforts of SFI Implementation Committees." • See 10.2.1 above.
12.2	***"Program Participants shall support and promote, at the state, provincial or other appropriate levels, mechanisms for public outreach, education, and involvement related to forest management."***
12.2.1	"Support for the SFI Implementation Committee program to address outreach, education, and technical assistance (e.g., toll-free numbers, public sector technical assistance programs)." • See 10.2.1 above.
12.2.3	"Recreation opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives." Exceeds the SFI Standard: The recreational and educational programs and facilities on state forests are very well designed and maintained, with recreational use given a high priority. Increases in demand for off-road vehicle use absent budget increases may compromise this current program strength. • Confirmed by review of recreational facilities on all state forests that the provision of recreational opportunities is a major strength of the state forest management program. Recreational activities that are encouraged and supported include hunting, trapping, wildlife viewing, camping, swimming, picnicking, boating, canoeing, fishing, snowmobile riding, biking on paved trails and mountain biking, skiing, snowshoeing, and enjoyment of the forest's scenic resources. • The trails, campgrounds, and visitor facilities on these lands are generally very well designed and maintained. One exception involved the ATV trails on the Black River State Forest, where sandy conditions and heavy use are contributing to trail bed widening and down cutting. Analysis is being done and funding sought to upgrade these trails so they can withstand heavy use b modern, powerful ATVs. • BRSF: confirmed restoration of CCC-era stone wall, roads maintenance, bathroom upgrades at recreation sites, regravel of ATV parking lots, improvements to signage (interpretive signs).
12.3	***"Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall participate in the development of public land planning and management processes."***
12.3.1	"Involvement in public land planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public." • Confirmed by interviews that the Wisconsin DNR has an effective program for involvement in public land planning and management activities.
12.3.2	"Appropriate contact with local stakeholders over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal, or independent collaboration."

	DNR's efforts to involve and inform the public regarding management programs are strong and steadily expanding through use of the web, mailings, public meetings, and newsletters. • Interviews and review of available documentation confirmed that state forest managers interact frequently with affected individuals and groups. • BRSF: A new "BRSF Master Plan" is being developed using the updated process that provides for public input at 3 stages: 1) Issue identification after publishing background reports on conditions; 2) Discussion of alternatives; and 3) Draft final plan with selected alternative. • Meeting #1 was well attended - from Wisconsin State Forests, Black River State Forest Monitoring and Evaluation Report, Fiscal Year 2007: "The goals and vision statement, regional analysis, and public participation plan have been completed and presented at the first public meeting held in February of 2007. Over 50 participants attended this meeting." • BRSF Meeting #2 for discussion of alternatives is planned for fall 2007. • BRSF reported interacting with HoChunk tribe, Jackson County Forest, loggers, Friends of Black River, local clubs for skiing and birding. The superintendent writes monthly newspaper articles about the forest. • GKSF has newsletter and public meetings • CESF has prepared a draft property assessment, is preparing it for public review (step #1 of the three stages of public involvement during state forest master planning.
12.4	***"Program Participants with forest management responsibilities on public lands shall confer with affected indigenous peoples."***
12.4.1	"Program that includes communicating with affected indigenous peoples to enable Program Participants to a. understand and respect traditional forest related knowledge; b. identify and protect spiritually, historically, or culturally important sites; and c. address the sustainable use of nontimber forest products of value to indigenous peoples in areas where Program Participants have management responsibilities on public lands." • BRSF staff met in March, 2007 with the cultural resources staff specialist for the Ho Chunk Nation to show all 2007 timber sales; will meet Monday with tribe (2 tribal members who are on tribe's natural resources staff) on gathering and ceremonial hunting areas; have traded lands in the past and relocated some roads as needed.
12.5	***"Program Participants shall establish, at the state, provincial, or other appropriate levels, procedures to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, the public, or Program Participants regarding practices that appear inconsistent with the SFI Standard principles and objectives."***
12.5.1	"Support for SFI Implementation Committee efforts (toll-free numbers and other efforts) to address concerns about apparent nonconforming practices." • See 10.2.1 above.
12.6	***"Program Participants shall report annually to the SFI Program on their compliance with the SFI Standard."***
12.6.1*	"Prompt response to the SFI annual progress report." • Confirmed with SFI, Inc.
13.1*	***"Program Participants shall establish a management review system to examine findings and progress in implementing the SFI Standard, to make appropriate improvements in programs, and to inform their employees of changes."***
13.1.1	"System to review commitments, programs, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness." • The system for reviewing program effectiveness has two broad categories:

	performance reviews for staff with program-specific responsibilities, and program-focused reviews. Master plan monitoring, an FSC focus, also covers an important element of program effectiveness. Annual Reports provide a fairly comprehensive review of annual actions and activities on each forest, and in some cases managers are starting to link the annual report to the management plan. The department regularly conducts a comprehensive study of the effectiveness of major programs.
13.1.2	"System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving SFI Standard objectives and performance measures." • Confirmed that the Leadership Team Meetings regularly include updates about certification status and changes in programs needed to maintain certification or close corrective actions. • Paul Pingrey, Forest Certification Assessment Team Leader, coordinates this process and is very effective at ensuring that issues raised during certification reviews receive attention at all appropriate levels. Follow-through on systems changes related to certification has been consistently very good.
13.1.3	"Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve SFI conformance." • Confirmed by review of the following information provided by Wisconsin DNR that management is kept well-informed of progress and that changes and improvements continue to be made to the program (see below for a list of improvements). o The Wisconsin DNR Forestry Leadership Team (FLT) reviewed and acted on forest certification issues at two meetings: October 5, 2006 and December 8, 2006. The top Forestry management team was briefed on continued progress on closed SFI and FSC CARs. They also endorsed a policy related to master plan implementation monitoring in response to an FSC CAR. FLT expressed its support for a scoping audit to expand the State Forest certificate to other DNR Lands. At the December 8 meeting, which was held jointly with the Land Leadership Team (LLT), FLT members explained how the Department has addressed SFI and FSC CARs on State Forests that are likely to also be issues for other DNR lands. o The Land Leadership Team received a detailed presentation on February 7, 2007 regarding potential forest certification issues for Parks, Wildlife Areas, Natural Areas and other DNR properties. The team initiated discussion about operational changes that would be needed to address SFI and FSC CARs that are common across DNR programs. Since LLT program bureaus provide support to the Forestry Division for conformance to certification indicators, these discussions also reinforce commitments on already certified State Forest acreage. o The Wisconsin Council on Forestry, a statutory council that advises the Governor, received a comprehensive forest certification update on March 12, 2007 including improvements made to assure conformance to SFI and FSC principles. The Council considered forest certification issues presented by the Forestry Division at its meeting on June 12, 2007. Council members affirmed the importance of certification to the Governor's "Grow Wisconsin" initiative. The Council adopted a resolution encouraging the Department to extend forest certification to more lands. During summer 2006 meetings, the Council on Forestry also recommended to the Governor that state directives related to green building projects endorse SFI as well as FSC certified sources of wood. o The State Forest Superintendents quarterly meetings include forest certification improvements as a standing issue on each agenda.

Significant Changes, Initiatives and Actions in the Wisconsin State Forest program
(source: Summary, Updated Status Of The Active And Closed Wisconsin DNR Corrective Action Requests, July 2007)

- The Brule River State Forest acquired an additional 6,000 acres of land in June 2006 using stewardship funds.

- Wisconsin State Forest Continuous Forest Inventory data collection began in Jan of 2007. Over 250 plots have been completed to date. Over 3,000 plots will be sampled over a 5- year period. A wide variety of forest attributes, including composition, growth, mortality, health, soils, course woody debris, vegetation, etc

- State Forest Invasive Inventories have been completed. Additional inventory areas are being sampled in the summer of 2007. A control plan is being developed based on the inventory.

- The public lands forest management inventory database and user interface (WisFIRS) was significantly updated in 2007. Roll-out of the new system, a system that tracks stand variables and management practices, was completed in June 2007. All state forest staff were trained on how to use the new system. Reporting accomplishments for RECON updates (CAR 2004.3) will be very easy with the new system occurred.

- Progress has been made on developing BMPs for invasive species. The effort involves the Council on Forestry, external partners and DNR staff. The BMP will focus on forest mgmt, recreation, ROW and urban.

- Monitoring and Evaluation plans completed for Northern Forests. State Forest Working group and regional leaders will review process and product and enhance for 2008.

- The NHAL ATV citizen stakeholder group completed their 1-year charge to provide the Department with locations on the NHAL that are appropriate for the use of ATV. The Public meetings will be help in August of 2007 to seek feedback on the trail alternatives. The results of the stakeholders group and Departments next steps was presented at the June NRB meeting.

- Draft Master Plan for the Peshtigo River State Forest will be presented to the Natural Resource Board for Approval in September of 2007. The plan was completed using the new streamlined master planning process and was completed on schedule in just over 2 years.

- The master planning schedule has been completed and approved for the Coulee State Forest. The regional and property assessment is near completion. The planning kick-off meeting is scheduled for August 2007 with public meetings planned for the fall of 2007. A new area forestry team leader has been appointed and will serve as the planning team leader.

- The Black River State Forest is working on their Master Plan. The first public meeting was successfully completed in the spring of 2007. Developing management and use alternatives (issue based) are in progress. The plan is on schedule. A forester and regional recreation specialist retirement may have a slight impact on the planning process but staffing enhancements are in place.

- Progress being made with Facilities and Lands to craft a position description for a dedicated forest planner to work on state forest master plans.

- Master pan variance was completed for the Brule river to allow the addition of rustic backpack camping sites along the north country trail.

- Master plan variance completed for the Flambeau River for the removal of invasive species in eth wilderness zone along the Flambeau River

- A permanent rule was approved and is being implanted on all state lands to restrict the use of firewood on state lands. Firewood that originates greater than 50 miles of the property is not allowed unless the firewood is approved by the Dept of Ag, trade and Consumer Protection. The development of the rule required significant tribal input.

- The Bureau of legal services hired a new forestry attorney to support legal issues. The position was vacant late 2006. The attorney has been involved with master plan variance and amendments and master plan approvals as well as state forest operations.

- A new forest superintendent was hired at the black river state forest

- Significant progress is being made to accomplish the State Forest annual timber sale goal of 10,000 acres and update out-dated back log.

- Permanent rule providing the authority to contract with the private section to assist with establishing timber sales on state lands

- Field audit completed on state forests for compliance with soil disturbance policy. Results showed not non conformities.

- Annual integrated properties meeting and external stakeholder meetings were completed.

- The governors 08-09 budget included dollars to support the development and maintenance of ATV trails in northern forests

Field Sites

July 17 (Tuesday): Black River State Forest

Castle Mound Campground including campsites, restoration of CCC-era stone wall Buckthorn treatment area, and parking lot resizing

Perry Creek Mountain Biking Trail

7th Street ATV parking lot

Sale 1052, Tract 14-06 Red Pine second thinning, sold, example area marked, logger to "pair" trees and cut smaller one

Sale 1037, Tract 15-05: Completed Jack Pine clearcut, old declining JP stand held to age 58 due to esthetics, good wetland buffer, aerial JP seeding done following site preparation by roller-chopper

Battle Point Road: this state forest road was recently graveled; good condition including drainage

Dike 17 Wildlife Management Area: contained within BRSF but managed by Wildlife Division for sharp-tail and waterfowl; Federally endangered Whooping Crane observed; various burns, harvests to maintain open landscape

Observation Tower including parking lot and interpretive signs

Sale 1035 Area 2: partially completed regeneration harvest for oak and maple; buyer will turn sale back to state; observed visual buffer via young pine stand along paved public highway; limited buffer around wetland but not in conflict with BMPs

Oxbow Lake planting site: failed multiple plantings, some good red pine and Jack Pine that are 6 to 15 feet tall but not adequate stocking; discussed causes including droughty site, some seedling loss to Sirropsis blight; across road the planting was more successful

Walked through 2003 clearcut to get to sale 1063; the clearcut is regenerating, so site damage

Sale 1063: First thinning of a mixed pine and oak stand (RP, JP, WP, oak) that has diverse structure; marked from below, somewhat light

July 18 (Wednesday): Governor Knowles State Forest

Sale GK224, Stand 1 and 2, also Unit B, Comp 20, Stand 17; blade-scarified prior to harvest by field crew, good technique;

Sale GK 222, Compartment 21, Stands 157 and 12: Some thinning, some Aspen Clearcut; good utilization of poor quality oak, low stumps; discussed "Form ER Endangered Species Review Document

St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, Soderbeck Landing: discussion of coordination of recreation and enforcement issues

Whole-tree harvest of Oak, JP, Aspen (viewed from vehicles): scarified prior to harvest with aerial seeding using Jack Pine; observed very little wood left behind, visually appealing but nutrient drain questions

Sale GK 214 (and parking for Brant Pines): Completed sale in 3 blocks, including Aspen clearcut with Jack Pine, some areas scarified, and red pine thinning

Brant Pines: ski trail, hiking trail, interpretive signs

July 19 (Thursday): Coulee Experimental Forest

Site of former Berg Farm including research building and historic water measuring site (USFS Research)

Trail head for Skiing and recreational trails, gated access to parcel; law enforcement issues discussed

Ridge Road: multiple use road, wildlife management work, Yellow Gentians (endangered plant)

USDA Forest Service Interplanting Study from 1970s: clearcut, planted to augment natural regeneration from sprouts and seedlings, yellow-poplar though north of range has grown to dominant status in mixture with smaller red oak; potential for forest reserve to include these planted stands

Russian Coulee Road: major road restoration project

Recently thinned Red Pine thinnings (from vehicles)

Dry Bluff Prairie (aka "goat prairie"): natural openings on dry south and southwest facing slopes; difficult to maintain because of systematic fire exclusion; managers have been gradually increasing their efforts to cut brush and burn these areas.