

FSC Assessment Criteria Checklist

Criteria	Description	Comment	Recom/C ond.	Compliance	Notes
1.1.a	Forest management plans and operations demonstrate compliance with all applicable federal, state, county, municipal, and tribal laws, and administrative requirements (e.g., regulations). Violations, outstanding complaints or investigations are provided to the Certifying Body (CB) during the annual audit.	The FMP, or other supporting documents, must include a brief qualitative description of applicable laws.	R	No violations observed during the assessment and audit process.	
	To facilitate legal compliance, the forest owner or manager ensures that employees and contractors, commensurate with their responsibilities, are duly informed about applicable laws and regulations. For family forests, the management plan or other documents provided to the CB need only include a brief qualitative description of applicable laws. Also, there are no violations observed during the assessment and audit process.			On-the-ground observations show no evidence that employees and contractors are not observing applicable laws and regulations.	
2.1.c	Boundaries of land ownership and use rights are clearly identified on the ground and on maps prior to commencing management activities in the vicinity of the boundaries.	The FMP must be updated to reference how property lines and corners are identified and/or marked in the field.	R		
3.2.a	During management planning, the forest owner or manager consults with American Indian groups that have legal rights or other binding agreements to the FMU to avoid harming their resources or rights.		R	Larger landowners provide documentation of communication with local tribes. This could be satisfied through a stakeholder outreach letter.	
4.1.e	The forest owner or manager provides work opportunities to qualified local applicants and seeks opportunities for purchasing local goods and services of equal price and quality.	Landowner is encouraged to contact NCF for help identifying high quality loggers, consulting foresters and other local contractors.	R		
4.4.d	For public forests, consultation includes the following components: 1. Clearly defined and accessible methods for public participation are provided in both long and short-term planning processes, including harvest plans and operational plans; 2. Public notification is sufficient to allow interested stakeholders the chance to learn of upcoming opportunities for public review and/or comment on the proposed management; 3. An accessible and affordable appeals process to planning decisions is available.				

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5.1.0	Forest management should strive toward economic viability, while taking into account the full environmental, social, and operational costs of production, and ensuring the investments necessary to maintain the ecological productivity of the forest.	Landowner is encouraged to diversify revenue streams for the property. Options include; conservation easements, gov't. cost-share programs, carbon offsets, non-timber forest products, value-added manufacturing, etc. Contact NCF for <u>more information</u> .	R		
5.2.a	FF Indicator 5.2.a Low risk of negative social or environmental impact. 5.2.a Where forest products are harvested or sold, opportunities for forest product sales and services are given to local harvesters, value-added processing and manufacturing facilities, and other operations that are able to offer services at competitive rates and levels of service.	Landowner can contact NCF for a list of local wood products manufacturers, such as small or portable mill operators and secondary manufacturers.	R		
5.2.b	The forest owner or manager takes measures to optimize the use of harvested forest products and explores product diversification where appropriate and consistent with management objectives.	Landowner is encouraged to research smaller niche markets such as small diameter & craft wood, native nursery plants, edibles & medicinals, boughs and greens, etc. Contact NCF for more details.	R		
5.2.d		If landowner decides to manage for or sell non-timber forest products, FMP should be updated to include more detailed information on management and marketing objectives.	R		
5.3.0	Forest management should minimize waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources.	To the extent practical, post-harvest slash should be lopped and scattered and/or gathered into habitat piles vs. burned following logging.	R		
5.3.b	Harvest practices are managed to protect residual trees and other forest resources, including: 1) soil compaction, rutting and erosion are minimized; 2) residual trees are not significantly damaged to the extent that health, growth, or values are noticeably affected; 3) damage to NTFPs is minimized during management activities; 4) techniques and equipment that minimize impacts to vegetation, soil, and water are used whenever feasible.	Landowner is encouraged to use precision tree falling techniques and small-scale, low-impact logging equipment when harvesting timber in order to minimize damage to residual trees. Contact NCF for training opportunities.	R		

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5.6.a	On family forests, a sustained yield harvest level analysis shall be completed.	Landowner must develop an annual sustained yield projection and document in FMP.	C		
5.6.b	Average annual harvest levels, over rolling periods of no more than 10 years, do not exceed the calculated sustained yield harvest level.			Landowner must submit harvest records	Could be state timber cutting permits
6.1.e	On public lands, assessments developed in Indicator 6.1.a and management approaches developed in Indicator 6.1.c are made available to the public in draft form for review and comment prior to finalization. Final assessments are also made available.	Landowner should post FMP and related planning documents to website for public access.	R		
6.3.a.1	The forest owner or manager maintains, enhances, and/or restores under-represented successional stages in the FMU that would naturally occur on the types of sites found on the FMU.	Forest owner is encouraged to use variable density and variable retention harvesting to begin introducing greater species and age class diversity to the forest.	R		
6.3.b	To the extent feasible within the size of the ownership, particularly on larger ownerships, management maintains, enhances, or restores habitat conditions suitable for well-distributed populations of animal species that are characteristic of forest ecosystems within the landscape	FMP should be updated to include a more detailed description of wildlife habitat conservation and enhancement strategies.	R		
6.3.f	Forest Management maintains, enhances, or restores habitat components and associated stand structures, in abundance and distribution that could be expected from naturally occurring processes. These components include: a) large live trees, live trees with decay or declining health, snags, and well-distributed coarse down and dead woody material. Legacy trees where present are not harvested; and b) vertical and horizontal complexity. Trees selected for retention are generally representative of the dominant species naturally found on the site. Owners and managers retain (or, if absent, recruit) legacy trees, old and large trees, snags and woody debris to sustain populations of native plants, fungi, and animals, both within the harvest unit and across the FMU.	Landowner should maximize retention of large woody debris and snags during harvest, in balance with safety requirements.	R		
6.3.g.1	When even-aged systems are employed, and during salvage harvests, live trees and other native vegetation are retained within the harvest unit as described in Appendix C.		R	10-30% basal area is retained in openings larger than 6 acres	

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6.3.h	The forest owner or manager assesses the risk of, prioritizes, and, as warranted, develops and implements a strategy to prevent or control invasive species, including:	FMP must be updated to include provisions for controlling and/or eradicating invasive species such as Himalayan Blackberry, Scotch Broom, etc.	C		
6.4.a	The forest owner or manager documents the ecosystems that would naturally exist on the FMU, and assesses the adequacy of their representation and protection in the landscape.	Forest owner is encouraged to update FMP to include a description of historic forest types and ecosystems in the area.	R	The forest owner or manager documents the ecosystems that would naturally exist on the FMU, and assesses the adequacy of their representation and protection in the landscape.	
6.5.c	Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to: control erosion; minimize forest damage during harvesting; road construction; and all other mechanical disturbances; and protect water resources.	Prior to commercial harvesting, landowner should update FMP with description of harvest plan, including: harvest prescriptions, techniques, site preparation, timing, and equipment used.	C		
6.5.d	The transportation system is pre-planned, designed, located, constructed, maintained, and/or reconstructed to minimize the extent and impact of the system and its potential cumulative adverse effects.	Landowner is encouraged to maintain a forest road or trail system that provides reliable access to all areas of the property where future management will occur. A map and description of forest roads and trails should be included in FMP.	R		
6.5.e.1	There are requirements for minimum SMZ widths and explicit limitations on the activities that can occur within those SMZs. These are outlined as requirements in Appendix E.	FMP will be updated to reference how riparian zones will be managed according to FSC guidelines.	C		
6.5.h	Grazing by domesticated animals is controlled to protect in-stream habitats and water quality, the species composition and viability of the riparian vegetation, and the banks of the stream channel from erosion.		NA		

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6.6.b	Written strategies are developed and implemented that justify the use of chemical pesticides. Family forest owners/managers may use brief and less technical written procedures for applying common over-the-counter products. Any observed misuse of these chemicals may be considered as violation of requirements in this Indicator. Whenever feasible, an eventual phase-out of chemical use is included in the strategy.	Forest owner must update FMP to include a policy on chemical use as well as a description of why non-chemical alternatives were not used.	C		
6.6.e	If chemicals are used, the effects are monitored and the results are used for adaptive management. Records are kept of pest occurrences, control measures, and incidences of worker exposure to chemicals. FF Guidance: Monitoring and recordkeeping may be brief and less technical for family forests, such as keeping a log or list of chemical use and application dates, rates, methods of application, the application area and effectiveness.	Landowner will provide annual records of all forest chemicals used. Records should include type of chemical, amount used, date of application, location of application and on what species.	C		
7.1.a	7.1.a A written management plan exists for the property or properties for which certification is being sought. The management plan includes the following components: i. Management objectives (ecological, silvicultural, social, and economic) and duration of the plan. ii. Quantitative and qualitative description of the forest resources to be managed, including at minimum stand-level descriptions of the land cover, including species and size/age class and referencing inventory information. iii. Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, prescriptions, rationale, and typical harvest systems (if applicable) that will be used. iv. Description of harvest limits (consistent with Criterion 5.6) and species selection. Also, description of the documentation considered from the options listed in Criterion 5.6 if the FMU does not have a calculated annual harvest rate. v. Description of environmental assessment and safeguards based on the assessment, including approaches to: (1) pest and weed management, (2) fire management, and (3) protection of riparian management zones; (4) protection of representative samples of existing ecosystems (see Criterion 6.4) and management of High Conservation Value Forests (see Principle 9). vi. Description of location and protection of rare, threatened, and endangered species and plant community types. vii. Description of procedures to monitor the forest, including forest	Landowner will develop comprehensive FMP that addresses, at a minimum, the attributes listed to the left. Ask NNRG staff for additional resources for developing a FMP.	C		

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8.1.0	The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be determined by the scale and intensity of forest management operations as well as the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment. Monitoring procedures should be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.	Landowner is encouraged to participate in the WA Nature Mapping Program in order to systematically document native plant and wildlife use of property. Contact NCF for more details.	R		
8.2.0	Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor, at a minimum, the following indicators: a) Yield of all forest products harvested. b) Growth rates, regeneration and condition of the forest. c) Composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna. d) Environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations. e) Costs, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.	Landowner is encouraged to install permanent inventory and monitoring plots in order to establish baseline values for timber volumes and, stand composition and other forest ecology attributes.	R		
8.2.b	For all commercially harvested products, an inventory system is maintained. The inventory system includes at a minimum: a) species, b) volumes, c) stocking, d) regeneration, and e) stand and forest composition and structure; and f) timber quality.	Landowner will maintain records of all harvested forest products. At a minimum, records should include species, volumes and date of harvest. A summary of harvest activities will be provided to NCF on the date of annual certification renewal.	C		
8.2.d.2	A monitoring program is in place to assess the condition and environmental impacts of the forest-road system.	Landowner's forest monitoring plan should include a description of how roads will be periodically assessed for erosion and other potential impacts to surface water resources.	C		
8.3.0	Documentation shall be provided by the forest manager to enable monitoring and certifying organizations to trace each forest product from its origin, a process known as the "chain of custody."	Landowner will ensure that FSC chain of custody guidelines are met when selling forest products to an FSC buyer. Contact NCF for assistance.	C		
		Forest owner will ensure that their FSC chain-of-custody number (SA-FM/COC-1394), and FSC Claim (FSC 100%) is on all load tickets.	C		
9.1.a	Assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with the High Conservation Value Forests will be completed, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management.	Landowner will identify and map the presence of High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF) within their FMU.	C		