

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

*State of New York, Bureau of Forest Resource Management*

## SCS-FM/COC-00104N

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CERTIFIED	EXPIRATION
28 January 2018	27 January 2023

DATE OF FIELD EVALUATION
11-13 September 2018
DATE OF LAST UPDATE
17 October 2018

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## Foreword

Cycle in annual surveillance evaluations				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 <sup>st</sup> annual evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 <sup>nd</sup> annual evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 <sup>rd</sup> annual evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <sup>th</sup> annual evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (expansion of scope, Major CAR audit, special audit, etc.):
Name of Forest Management Enterprise (FME) and abbreviation used in this report:				
New York State Department of Conservation (NYDEC), Bureau of Forest Resource Management (BFRM)				

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

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

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

### Organization of the Report

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

## Table of Contents

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SECTION A – PUBLIC SUMMARY .....	4
1. GENERAL INFORMATION .....	4
1.1 Evaluation Team.....	4
1.2 Total Time Spent on Evaluation .....	4
1.3 Standards Used .....	5
2. CERTIFICATION EVALUATION PROCESS .....	5
2.1 Evaluation Itinerary, Activities, and Site Notes.....	5
2.2 Evaluation of Management Systems .....	11
3. CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT PRACTICES .....	11
4. RESULTS OF EVALUATION .....	11
4.1 Definitions of Major CARs, Minor CARs and Observations .....	11
4.2 History of Findings for Certificate Period.....	12
4.3 Existing Corrective Action Requests and Observations .....	12
4.4 New Corrective Action Requests and Observations .....	19
5. STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS .....	24
5.1 Stakeholder Groups Consulted .....	25
5.2 Summary of Stakeholder Comments and Evaluation Team Responses .....	25
6. CERTIFICATION DECISION .....	26
7. ANNUAL DATA UPDATE .....	26
SECTION B – APPENDICES (CONFIDENTIAL).....	34
Appendix 1 – List of FMUs Selected for Evaluation .....	34
Appendix 2 – Staff and Stakeholders Consulted.....	34
Appendix 3 – Additional Evaluation Techniques Employed .....	35
Appendix 4 – Pesticide Derogations .....	35
Appendix 5 – Forest Management Standard Conformance Table .....	36
Appendix 6 – Chain of Custody Indicators for FMEs Conformance Table .....	63
Appendix 7 – Trademark Standard Conformance Table.....	63

## SECTION A – PUBLIC SUMMARY

### 1. General Information

#### 1.1 Evaluation Team

<b>Auditor name:</b>	Beth Jacqmain	<b>Auditor role:</b>	FSC Lead Auditor, SFI Team
<b>Qualifications:</b>	<p>Ms. Jacqmain is a Certification Forester with SCS Global Services. Master of Science in Forest Biology/Ecology from Auburn University and Bachelor of Science in Forest Management from Michigan State University. Beth has 20+ years' experience in forestry including public land management (including USFS), private consulting, and private corporate forest management working with landowners and harvest crews. Qualified ANSI RAB accredited ISO 14001 EMS Lead Auditor and a FSC Lead Auditor for Forest Management/Chain of Custody. Audited and led FSC evaluations, harvest and logging operations certification evaluations, and joint PEFC and ATFS certifications. A 10-year member of the Forest Guild, 20-year adjunct-Faculty with Itasca Community College, Natural Resources Department. Beth's experience is in forest management and ecology; ecosystem silviculture; the use of silviculture towards meeting strategic and tactical goals; nursery/tree regeneration; wildland fire fighting; forest timber quality improvement, conifer thinning operations, pine restoration, and fire ecology in conifer dominated systems. Beth has audited throughout the United States and in Australia, Fiji Islands, and New Zealand.</p>		
<b>Auditor Name:</b>	Keri Yankus	<b>Auditor role:</b>	SFI Lead Auditor, FSC Team
<b>Qualifications:</b>	<p>Keri Yankus has over 20 plus years of experience in the forestry industry. She has a B.S. in Forest Management and Recreation and Park Management from the University of Maine. She has worked as an employee for the following: US Army Corps of Engineers, MA, West Virginia Division of Forestry, National Park Service (South Dakota and Pennsylvania), Bureau of Land Management (31 States East of MS and Washington D.C.), NRCS (Michigan and Ohio), USDA Wildlife Services and joint with the Marines, Airforce, Navy and Coast Guard, DOD (North Carolina and New Hampshire), US Forest Service in Michigan and West Virginia. She worked for private industry as forester with Weyerhaeuser and Bioforest Technologies in USA and Canada. Keri holds current professional forestry licenses for West Virginia, and North Carolina, and is an SAF Certified Forester and an active SAF member. She is currently active GSD SAF and is serving on the board for NH Project Learning Tree. She has worked for NSF as an auditor since 2000. She also holds her certification as Exemplar Global Lead Auditor. She has conducted numerous EMS, SFI (FM, FS, CS and COC/PEFC), TLMI &amp; ATFS audits.</p>		

#### 1.2 Total Time Spent on Evaluation

A. Number of days spent on-site assessing the applicant:	3
B. Number of auditors participating in on-site evaluation:	2
C. Number of days spent by any technical experts (in addition to amount in line A):	0
D. Additional days spent on preparation, stakeholder consultation, and follow-up:	3
<b>E. Total number of person days used in evaluation:</b>	<b>13</b>

### 1.3 Standards Used

All standards used are available on the websites of FSC International ([www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org)) or SCS Global Services ([www.SCSglobalServices.com](http://www.SCSglobalServices.com)). All standards are available on request from SCS Global Services via the comment form on our website. When no national standard exists for the country/region, SCS Interim Standards are developed by modifying SCS’s Generic Interim Standard to reflect forest management in the region and by incorporating relevant components of any Draft Regional/National Standard and comments from stakeholders. More than one month prior to the start of the field evaluation, SCS Draft Interim Standards are provided to stakeholders identified by FSC International, SCS, forest managers under evaluation, and the FSC National or Regional Office for comment. SCS’s COC indicators for FMEs are based on the most current versions of the FSC Chain of Custody Standard, FSC Standard for Group Entities in Forest Management Groups (FSC-STD-30-005), and FSC Accreditation Requirements.

Standards used <i>NOTE: Please include the full standard name and Version number and check all that apply.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FSC-US Forest Management Standard, V1-0
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCS COC indicators for FMEs, V7-0
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FSC Trademark Standard (FSC-STD-50-001 V2-0)
	<input type="checkbox"/> FSC standard for group entities in forest management groups (FSC-STD-30-005), V1-1
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

## 2. Certification Evaluation Process

### 2.1 Evaluation Itinerary, Activities, and Site Notes

Evaluation dates	11-13 SEPTEMBER 2018
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Date: Tuesday, 11 September 2018	
Location/Site ID	Activities/ notes
DEC, Main Albany, NY office	<p>Opening Meeting: Introductions, client update, review scope of evaluation, audit plan, intro/update to FSC and SCS standards, confidentiality and public summary, conformance evaluation methods and tools review of open CARs/OBS, emergency and security procedures for evaluation team, final site selection adjustments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEC overview/updates</li> <li>• Other Presentations as requested</li> </ul> <p>Reviewed auditing process and status of previous NC and OFI’s. Contract language draft changes to close related TM CAR.</p> <p>Discussed schedule of Albany Staff interviews, confirmed the daily itinerary and safety considerations for the regions to be visited.</p> <p>Discussed and reviewed with various responsible staff: <i>HCVF and Natural Heritage, SFID- landscape planning status with updates (Cover type emphasis, patch size and rotation ages mapped in GIS) and training.</i></p> <p>Various other topics were <i>internal/external communications, roles and responsibilities changes - HR possible new hires, status of regeneration &amp; inventory, Old Growth, Unit Management Planning and review.</i> Internal Audits and Management Review covered in the Albany Leadership.</p>

Travel	Travel to SUNY ESF then to Regions 6 & 7. Phone interview while traveling. Topic: Wood utilization and marketing update, external communication: “Soft wood prospectus for Regions 4 & 7”. This is a pilot program. Continued document review and discussions
Center for Native Peoples and Environment, SUNY ESF Campus	On-site interviews at SUNYESF Syracuse, NY, 4-6 pm. Met with representative and affiliates of the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment to discuss the interactions between the NYDEC and indigenous Peoples. Topics: Involvement in the Unit Management Plan Process through summer intern. Status of joint efforts and outreach by NY DEC. Other topics.
<b>Date: Wednesday, 12 September – Regions 6 (R6) Lowville and Region 7 (R7) Altmar/Cortland</b>	
R7: Salmon Fish Hatchery	Brief Region office opening meeting, finalize field site selections for the day.
R7: Salmon Falls Unique Area, TRP 11123, TRP 10680 (HCVF, recreation trail)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed TRPs for 11123, Technical Rope Rescue and Drive Operations Training, and 10680, Wedding Ceremony.</li> <li>• Area falls under the Salmon Falls Unique Area UMP. Walked and examined the handicap accessible (ADA) trails to the 110-foot Salmon Falls water fall. Special recreation regulations apply, due to past safety issues.</li> <li>• Entire Unique Area is considered HCVF as cultural and historical center for seasonal hunting and fishing by the Five Nations of Iroquois Indians. Falls are located 19 miles upstream from where river meets Lake Ontario. Falls were barrier for fish migration where Onondaga, Oneida, and Cayuga tribes annually harvested Atlantic salmon and other fish species.</li> <li>• Examined and discussed map for PROS, Predicted Richness Overlay, which is a layer models and predicts potential biodiversity habitat. Foresters noted HCVF designation, analyzed for potential RTE and confirmed likely RTE. Notified Natural Heritage (NH) staff who then visited the area and completed surveys.</li> <li>• The Salmon Falls Unique Area is protected from all management. There is no harvest allowed. HCVF review by foresters included note of special cliff communities, flora and fauna. Plant protections for bird's eye primrose and yellow mountain saxifrage, both confirmed to be growing on steep cliffs. NH staff also confirmed shale and talus cliff communities, forest flood plain community. Two animals were identified for protection including eastern pearl shell and pied-billed grebe (avian).</li> <li>• Discussions: Temporary Revocable Permits (TRPs), importance of recreational use as economic driver for this Region, Indigenous People consultation and UMPs, invasive plants and herbicide applications.</li> </ul> <p>DEC staff described training they received in using the natural heritage and PROS layers. Forester described process for investigating occurrences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checked for and found occurrence on GIS layer.</li> <li>• Look up guidance and descriptions.</li> <li>• Analyzed and evaluated site potential for actual occurrences.</li> <li>• Consult with Natural Heritage as warranted to confirm or rule out.</li> </ul>
R7: Japanese knotweed (invasive) herbicide treatment	Spray site for invasive Japanese knotweed. Visually identified by forester on roadside near recreational trail head (described above). Forester arranged treatment with another forester who is a licensed pesticide applicator. Records available and checked on-site, identified herbicides used. Stem injected used to avoid any drift to non-target species. Monitoring was done by forester and showed over 95% success.

<p>(Salmon Falls Unique Area UMP)</p>	<p>Approval for spraying under the General EIS for the Strategic Plan State Forest Management (SPSFM). Chemical use is recorded in an official registry maintained in office and examined by auditors. Registry record provided digitally by applying forester and examined. Plans to avoid mowing in cooperation with NYDOT to reduce spread.</p> <p>Discussion: Invasives training for identification and treatment; public consultation for spray projects; requirements for applicator’s license</p>
<p>R7: Oswego 8; Sale Contract #TX10745 Active Harvest Site (Salmon Falls UMP)</p>	<p>Logging subcontractor saw/loading equipment on site. Sale opened and started in August. Sale area 43 acres within over 140 acres treatment area. Heavy, significant rain 2 days prior to audit visit resulted in self-shut down by logger and relocation to another site.</p> <p>Degraded old agricultural field planted with pine and being shifted to hardwood cover type. Avian potential identified in PROs layer but ruled out because lack of open water required by identified species. Forester created new landing with easier access to southern portion of stand and away from an existing recreational snowmobile trail on north side of sale area. Timber sale contract inspected. Northern hardwood thinning, marked and partially cut. Prescription to remove ash and thin other hardwoods from below.</p> <p>BMPs in conformance. Some residual damage to trees along primary skid trail but otherwise no observed damage to residual trees beyond landings and primary logging haul route. Residual damage well within 5% allowed by contract terms. NYDEC signage with correct FSC logo usage.</p> <p>Reviewed sale planning and examined landing layout, contract and Sale Diary which is a log for recording sale administration visits and BMP checks. Clean landing, no trash, no spills.</p> <p>Gravel used at landing provided by operator per contract terms, 160 tons.</p> <p>Discussions: EAB and EAB Quarantine Notice, Pre-Harvest meetings and documentation, Trails protection in harvest plan, monitoring of gravel use for road maintenance. Stream off-property along southern access landing was buffered on state property where close to property line. Reviewed BMP inspection log, pre-assessment checklists. Discussion: Tug Hill snowmobile trail, recreation economic revenue.</p>
<p>R7: Oswego 4, Stands C15, C16, C18, C24; TX10885 (Chateaugay SF, Eastern Lake Ontario UMP)</p>	<p>Completed harvest, treatment area 75 acres, harvested on 33 marked to remove 1/3<sup>rd</sup> to 2/5ths of stand volume. Former old field planted during CCC to white and red pine. Per UMP prescription objective is to shift from planted red pine to restore to mixed white pine and northern hardwood trees species. Harvest of small patch cuts with seed trees retained designed to regenerate hardwood tree species. Monitoring found regeneration did not meet objectives. Having attended the NE Silviculture Institute, the forester determined that size of patch cut areas were likely too small. Will now consider planting options.</p> <p>Inspection of landing and sale area, no BMP issues. Sale area clean of debris. BMPs inspected with no issues. Active snowmobile trail protected by 100-foot buffer. Other trail uses included horse and ski trails. Some debris along trail and forester knowledgeable of clean-up options for trails. Note BMPs do not address trail debris/garbage, only landings. Examined Completion Report. Discussions: funding sources for planting, landscape planning, BMPs, reserves, wildlife habitat.</p>

<p>R7: Oswego 5, Stand A-3, TX108852 (HCVF) (Chateaugay SF, Eastern Lake Ontario UMP)</p>	<p>Recently closed, completed harvest area feeding into the Municipal Watershed for Village of Orwell (HCVF). Treatment area of 50.5 acres and sale/harvest area 40 acres. Intermediate thinning in an even-aged, red pine planted stand following UMP plan to allow succession to natural, unevenaged hardwood regeneration. Marked to remove worst-first red pine, followed by small amounts of white pine, black cherry, hard and soft maples, and Norway spruce. Reviewed Stand Diagnosis and Prescription form which included treatment objectives, pre-harvest basal area, trees per acre, detailed stand species-diameters, planned snag, cavity, and reserve trees. Reviewed Sale Diary, Stand Diagnosis, Prescription/map, Completion Report. Adjacent to private land along SW edge of sale area, examined painted property boundary.</p> <p>There was a Protected Trout Stream, buffered by painted SMZ which was inspected and confirmed as sufficient and excluded from sale area. Broad-winged hawk sighting led to consultation with WL biologist for protection which was followed. Pre-assessment identified HCVF Historical home foundation discovered during sale prep and protected with a no-equipment exclusion area within sale boundary, added to archaeology layer per procedures.</p> <p>Discussions: HCVF training; recreational income for County and Region; local timber markets; small value firewood sales (&lt;\$500); staffing levels; Back's sedge; stocking guides used in sale planning and marking.</p>
<p>R7: TRP 11083, Herbicide spray (Sandy Creek SF)</p>	<p>Invasive Glossy buckthorn treatment project within completed harvest area, Oswego 7, Stand A-12.1, A-13. Cooperative project with Oswego SWCD who had funding to treat Glossy buckthorn and inquired with DEC forester for potential treatment sites. DEC suggested this one. SWCD put out the contract, provided and reviewed. Terms of contract required approval by DEC forestry staff. Contract provided to auditors. DEC approval required for herbicides applied and contractor terms. Treatment project contract examined.</p>
<p>R6: Oswego 2, Stand H49; TX100059 (Winona FS)</p>	<p>A local firewood sale, 9-acre using harvest to remove trees marked to cut. Harvested winter 2016. Examined PROs layer map which was used to check for HCVF and RTE. Objective is unevenaged stand of preferred species black cherry and sugar maple. BMP and site inspection, no issues on landings or along old skid trails. No damage to residual trees within stand. Wetland buffer confirmed marked with 3 paint stripes. Completion Report. Discussions: climate change, wood markets, Corp of Engineers</p>
<p>R6: Oswego RA 2, D28; X010751 (Winona SF)</p>	<p>Even-aged management of red and white pine and black cherry. Thinning in 2015 removed worst first with objective to produce high quality timber sawlogs, mainly red and white pine. Stocking guides used and reviewed. PROs layer plus map used. Confirmed effectiveness of sale planning, landing layout and design, administration and contract language. Trees marked for immediate thinning, even aged management 1/3 of the stand which is 37.7 acres. Observed trees marked for a notable SMZ wetland protection. Examined Sale Diary. Discussion occurred about White and Red Pine species. Observed good live crown ratio and spacing criteria for release in the field.</p>
<p>R6: Oswego 2, H-67.1, TS10059 (Winona UMP)</p>	<p>Completed 9-acre harvest done winter 2016. Improvement thinning in hardwood stand preferred retention species black cherry, red(?) maple, and hard maple. Removed mainly poor formed, diseased, or damaged black cherry sawtimber, some white ash sawtimber, and general small and poor-quality hardwoods in what was mostly a firewood cutting. State boundary marked 3 stripes which is also a no-cut designation. Foresters lay out skid trails and landings and specify retention of snag,</p>

	cavity, and den trees. Inspected SMZ along western edge of south portion of stand. Noted – high basal area left on site compared to described target BA in prescription. Examined Sale Diary, Stand Diagnosis and Prescription (stocking guides). Discussion: local markets; EAB, UMP timber harvest schedule (AAC); new forest inventory scheduling.
R6: Bargy Road	Examined NYDEC road. Road is graded every spring and sides are mowed by NYDEC crews. This activity is put in a monthly report which is reported to the Region. Confirmed through a NYDEC regional personnel. Observed the road was well graded, cross drains were in place. Side ditching minimally present. Discussion occurred on the PFAR. No issues noted.
CCC camp stop (Winona State Forest)	Old CCC camp site, historic site. Discussions: TRPs, temporary resource permits used to authorize access to the public for events such as dog pulls, ski events, bicycle races, snowmobiling, snowshoeing and other. Viewed handicap accessible load doc.
R6: Oswego 2, D-18, X010023	Thinning done winter 2017 in red pine/white pine stand. Mostly removing saw timber and pulp wood of red pine and retaining almost all mature white pine stems. Also, harvested some sawtimber spruce, black cherry, and white ash along with pine, spruce, and hardwood pulp. Examined BMP inspection log, PROs+ map. Noted – high basal area compared to described target BA in prescription. Examined Completion Report, Stand Diagnosis and Prescription, Prescription Approval Checklist, PROs layer map, Bid Solicitation, Summary of Quotations, Sale Contract, Sale Diary. Discussions: bidding process; EAB; adjacent landowner communications; UMP stakeholder consultations; seedling orders
<b>Date: Thursday, 13 September</b>	
Region 5 Office	Brief opening meeting and final site selections/adjustments. Schedule was adjusted to split auditors into 2 teams to add an active harvest site. Confirmed itinerary and safety considerations. Office review included: New Foresters show auditor the intra net website. Observed SOP's, Legal, research publications, SFI and FSC training for new staff hired, SFI and FSC commitment letter, and various SFI topics such as public interests including ATV, Mountain Bikes and other recreation opportunities. Roles and responsibilities changes were discussed - HR possible new hires, and status of regeneration & inventory. Northville office was checked for chemical storage two flammable cabinets (first aid kits, fire extinguishers and spill kits present), PPE, SDS Sheets for chemical management, safety equipment and newly revised Safety Manual was checked.
R4: Bear Swamp State Forest, active logging site	Interviewed logging company owner and operator on-site. Confirmed PPE, map, contract, spill kit, first aid kit, vehicle hazard kit with up-to-date extinguisher. Discussed contract terms, site adjustments with forester. Forester lays out skid trails and landings.
R5: Peck Hill State Forest Willie Marsh and UNH Beech Research TRP	Research /contract TRP process monitoring /Recreation Active TRP with the UNH. NYDEC forester communicated in the field that reporting issue related to notification requirement listed in the TRP was not followed by UNH. They had GPS the wrong trees. NYDEC followed up with the UNH and got trees flagged, marked and understood the research trial being implemented in the field on beech. Observed several trees had core boring samples removed. Research field transect crossed very active ATV/ recreation trail. Discussion on beach bark disease and monitoring processes. Reviewed documented information Letter dated May 2, 2018 from the

	Natural Resources Supervisor. Reviewed start date of March 1, 2018 and end date of March 1, 2020. TRP contract language checked. Issue noted in audit report.
R5: Peck Hill State Forest Willie Marsh ADA access	Legal/Recreation/monitoring/ management of contracts. Crossed primary road-Recreational Educational Kiosk explaining resources, and expectations to the general public. Confirmed log book that tracks recreational use. Numerous entries noted. Walked trail, observed numerous pull outs, trail well maintained. Observed ADA picnic table and primitive restroom facility, walked to newly built board walk. Reviewed document: CONTRACT NO. D010457 dated MARCH 8, 2017. Topics covers USDA Soil Maps, Soil Depth below Water Level Map, Permit 1: Freshwater Wetland under NYSDEC Article 24 003002.2 Permit 2: US Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide General Permit No. 24. Funding project through environmental justice.
R5: Peck Hill state Forest Mountain Bike trail	Planning new bike trail/ Agreements/UMP/ Monitoring Reviewed documented information: Stewardship Agreements 17-05-WA-01 and 17-05-NO-01 dated April 20, 2017. Agreement is with the Adirondack Velo Club. Walked the newly constructed mountain bike trail. Discussions occurred on implementation of layout of the Mountain Bike Trail and criteria used. It was observed one portion of the trail is steep. Forester discussed how changes will need to be made to the trail. Trail layout has a visual screen adjacent to a primary road. Forester also communicated that during field monitoring that trail signs went up which were removed and documented in forester project folder. While walking on the bike trail discussion on UMP planning and that this area is projected for a timber harvest. A prescription has not been written as of yet.
R5: Fulton County State Forest HCVF Watershed Project	Right of way private landowner/ HCVF/Forest health/Water Shed Protection. Private road utilized for access to High Conservation Valued Forest(HCVF). Access is gated with double locks. NYDEC and landowner have joint access. No trash noted and boundary lines delineated. Observed signage for both private and state ownership. Observed hardwood buffer parallel to main highway per visual guidelines. Foresters checked the Natural Heritage data base and found no known species. SMZ delineated and the primary watershed is protected in the HCVF. UMP discussions on landowner input. Landowner agreed to foot trail for access. The right of way is legally deeded. Discussed long term monitoring for forest health conditions since HCVF primary species is Hemlock. The software application iMapInvasives is expected to be used as part of monitoring. Wildlife topic discussed was the stream provided great fish habitat. On-going consultation will happen to further communicate with affected Indigenous Peoples in the UMP.
R5: Rockwood State Forest (HCVF)	Discussions occurred on drafted conceptual prescription for state forest in Fulton on Lowville State Forest. Reviewed documents showing cover types, stand identification. Observed in the field the stand is overly mature for HCVF. Seems overstocked and susceptible to insect and disease. Discussion: TRP terms in contract, authorized/unauthorized access.
Region 5, Northville Office	Closing Meeting Preparation: Auditors consolidate notes, deliberate, and confirm evaluation findings. Externally Observed by 1 witnessing auditor and 1 technical expert ASI external witnessing audit.
Region 5, Northville Office	Closing Meeting: Review preliminary findings (potential non-conformities and observations), questions, and discuss next steps.

## 2.2 Evaluation of Management Systems

SCS deploys interdisciplinary teams with expertise in forestry, social sciences, natural resource economics, and other relevant fields to assess an FME's conformance to FSC standards and policies. Evaluation methods include reviewing documents and records, interviewing FME personnel and contractors, implementing sampling strategies to visit a broad number of forest cover and harvest prescription types, observing implementation of management plans and policies in the field, and collecting and analyzing stakeholder input. When there is more than one team member, each member may review parts of the standards based on their background and expertise. On the final day of an evaluation, team members convene to deliberate the findings of the assessment jointly. This involves an analysis of all relevant field observations, interviews, stakeholder comments, and reviewed documents and records. Where consensus among team members cannot be achieved due to lack of evidence, conflicting evidence or differences of interpretation of the standards, the team is instructed to report these in the certification decision section and/or in observations.

## 3. Changes in Management Practices

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There were no significant changes in the management and/or harvesting methods that affect the FME's conformance to the FSC standards and policies.

Significant changes occurred since the last evaluation that may affect the FME's conformance to FSC standards and policies (*describe*):

## 4. Results of Evaluation

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### 4.1 Definitions of Major CARs, Minor CARs and Observations

*Major CARs:* Major nonconformances, either alone or in combination with nonconformances of all other applicable indicators, result (or are likely to result) in a fundamental failure to achieve the objectives of the relevant FSC Criterion given the uniqueness and fragility of each forest resource. These are corrective actions that must be resolved or closed out before a certificate can be awarded. If Major CARs arise after an operation is certified, the timeframe for correcting these nonconformances is typically shorter than for Minor CARs. Certification is contingent on the certified FME's response to the CAR within the stipulated time frame.

*Minor CARs:* These are corrective action requests in response to minor nonconformances, which are typically limited in scale or can be characterized as an unusual lapse in the system. Most Minor CARs are the result of nonconformance at the indicator-level. Corrective actions must be closed out within a specified time period of award of the certificate.

*Observations:* These are subject areas where the evaluation team concludes that there is conformance, but either future nonconformance may result due to inaction or the FME could achieve exemplary status through further refinement. Action on observations is voluntary and does not affect the maintenance of the certificate. However, observations can become CARs if performance with respect to the indicator(s) triggering the observation falls into nonconformance.

### 4.2 History of Findings for Certificate Period

FM Principle	Cert/Re-cert Evaluation	1 <sup>st</sup> Annual Evaluation	2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Evaluation	3 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Evaluation	4 <sup>th</sup> Annual Evaluation
P1					
P2					
P3	3.2.b				
P4	4.2a and 4.2b				
P5					
P6					
P7	7.3.a				
P8	8.2.d.1				
P9					
P10					
COC for FM					
Trademark	1.15				
Group	N/A				
Other	N/A				

### 4.3 Existing Corrective Action Requests and Observations

<b>Finding Number: 2017.1</b>	
Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Observation	
<b>FMU CAR/OBS issued to</b> (when more than one FMU):	
<b>Deadline</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification/recertification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 months or next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Observation – response is optional <input type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
<b>FSC Indicator:</b>	FSC US FM, 3.2.b
<b>Non-Conformity</b> (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations): The FME’s policy, <i>Contact, Cooperation, and Consultation with Indian Nations (CP-42)</i> , requires that the NY BFRM undertake good faith efforts to consult with Indian Nations on any Department BFRM decision or action which could foreseeably have Indian Nation implications. During discussions with NY BFRM staff, the auditors learned that the level of consultation with Indian Nations at the local level varies across the state. For example, Region 6 staff confirmed that no effort was made to contact Indian Nations as part of developing the Oneida Hills UMP. Discussions with staff in other regions suggest that not all employees are aware of the requirement for consulting with Indian Nations on forest management planning; this observation and the variability in consultation was confirmed by state-level staff.  At the state level, there seems to be a commitment to building relationships with Indian Nations. For example, since 2015 the Office of Environmental Justice has held an Annual BFRM/Indian Nations Leaders Meeting to discuss mutual interests. In addition, there is a mechanism in place at the state level for Indian Nations to submit issues/complaints: the Indian Nations Affairs Coordinator forwards issues/complaints to the appropriate subsection in the NY BFRM and ensures resolution. However, this	

<p>awareness of the need to consult with Indian Nations is not reflected at the local level. Consultation with Indian Nations affected by the FMU’s management operations, regardless of whether they own property within or adjacent to lands managed by NY BFRM, must be completed in order to comply with the FSC Standard.</p>	
<p><b>Corrective Action Request (or Observation):</b>                  Demonstrable actions must be taken so that forest management does not adversely affect tribal resources. When applicable, evidence of, and measures for, protecting tribal resources must be incorporated in the management plan. This applies to tribal resources that may be located either within or off the FMU but are affected by management operations within the FMU (for example, effects on fish and game populations).</p>	
<p><b>FME response</b>                  (including any evidence submitted)</p>	<p>FME submitted 4 documents by email dated 5 September 2018. Documents included: <i>2018.06b_CP-42_contact_list[1].pdf</i>; <i>Final Indian Nation UMP consultation memo.doc</i>; <i>2017.08_IN_Contacts_Map[1].pdf</i>; <i>Indian Nations consultation update.msg</i>.</p> <p>Within the email memo, <i>Indian Nations consultation update.msg</i>, distributed to NYBFRM forestry staff, actions to be taken towards resolving this CAR. The memo directs staff to consult with the Indian Nations during UMP development using the procedure provided in the <i>Final Indian Nation UMP consultation memo.doc</i>. Staff are then advised to consult with designated, identified staff to help facilitate consultation with the Nations in the UMP process.</p> <p>Finally, BFRM informed staff of additional links at the internal website for the Division of Environmental Justice’s CP-42 information page which provides a current <i>Indian Nation Areas of Interest map</i> and an <i>Indian Nations contact list</i> maintained by the Indian Nations Affairs Coordinator. The map identifies specific BFRM staff with whom to consult and the Nations contact list provides several contacts for each indigenous nation identified.</p> <p>NYBFRM has been working on a process to consult with the Indian Nations during UMP development which is not yet finalized. The NY BFRM Indian Affairs Coordinator and the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment (CNPE) have been working together to develop this. NYBFRM anticipates completing the process/checklist for consultation in 2018-2019. Until the process is formalized and fully implemented the memo informs staff to contact the NYBFRM UMP Coordinator to facilitate consultation.</p>
<p><b>SCS review</b></p>	<p>Auditors reviewed the documents provided. Interviews with staff confirmed new procedures were understood and being implemented at the field level. Interviewed new UMP coordinator who serves as initial point of contact (POC) identified by BFRM for field staff as first POC for pursuing Native American consultations. Confirmed several examples of contacts already made by local UMP planners for this purpose. POC confirms with Bureau of Environmental Justice’s Indian Affairs Coordinator for additional guidance, as needed. Evidence for full implementation was given for 2 UMPs during the 2018 audit, the Salmon River and Draft Onondaga UMPs. Although the BFRM is still working out details for a simple checklist to assist UMP planners, the new procedures were distributed, and the immediate implementation of the new procedures is sufficient to warrant closure of this CAR.</p>

<b>Status of CAR:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)
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<b>Finding Number: 2017.2</b>
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<b>Select one:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Observation
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<b>FMU CAR/OBS issued to</b> (when more than one FMU):
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<b>Deadline</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification/recertification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 months or next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Observation – response is optional <input type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
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<b>FSC Indicator:</b>	FSC US FM 4.2a and 4.2b
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**Non-Conformity** (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations):

Isolated and minor safety issues were observed during the 2017 audit. Overall, the BFRM has a functioning health and safety system with policies and procedures that are well developed and largely understood by staff, as observed and confirmed through interviews during the audit. Several types of safety training are offered and completed by staff as confirmed by review of training records. However, retirements over the last several years combined with a growing body of new staff (either full-time or part-time, temporary) have contributed to gaps in understanding and/or following BFRM safety procedures. Individually these gaps may be isolated and minor but in combination warrant a Minor finding.

Over several Regions, the PPE available to and being used by staff was not consistent. BFRM has not clearly determined and communicated to all staff which PPE is required for job functions such as active timber sales. For example, the required use of hard hats on active timber sales and what defines an “active timber sale” was poorly understood by staff. See BFRM SOP B-11, Log landing Timber Harvest Jobsite Awareness Training. This BFRM procedure suggests steel-toed boots, hi-vis vests, and safety glasses should be used for active timber sale sites and requirement for use were generally not understood consistently by forestry staff. Auditors encountered staff with inadequate knowledge of requirements or use of available PPE across all Regions.

Finally, indicator 4.2, including full intent and guidance, requires machinery and equipment be well-maintained and in working order for worker safety. Vehicles available to forestry staff must be in working order to access and work in sometimes remote and difficult terrain (off-road). During the audit, there was an example of a vehicle in poor working condition that was obtained as a temporary loan vehicle while the two other primary field vehicles were in for repairs (X010224). This also highlights potential inadequacies around replacement and maintenance programs for state vehicles. Noted that vehicle breakdown was experienced during prior audits.

**Corrective Action Request** (or Observation):

The NY BFRM must meet or exceed all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families. The forest owner or manager and their employees and contractors must demonstrate a safe work environment. Applicable in this case is understanding of the full intent and guidance provided in the FSC US Forest Management Standard (2010) under indicators 4.2.b and 4.2.c.

<p><b>FME response</b> <i>(including any evidence submitted)</i></p>	<p>11/21/2017: BFRM provided additional information following the audit. There is a Commissioner Policy (CP) 61 / BFRM Vehicle Policy outlining the vehicle replacement requirements. Additionally, correspondence from the Chief of the Bureau of Transportation Services, Division of Operations confirms to me that “While DLF may not have control over when new vehicles are allocated, [BFRM staff] does have the ability to voice prioritized needs for replacement, up through the Division Director, who would then provide the info to DLF for consideration when developing the next vehicle purchase plan.” BFRM requested this nonconformance as vehicle replacement is something our Division ultimately has no control over. BFRM concludes that they do not have authority for directly acquiring new vehicles but only for requesting new ones.</p> <p>9/11/2018 update: BFRM submitted new documents and evidence. <u>Documents:</u> <i>Active Timber Harvest revision_blw.docx; BFRMVehiclePolicyReminder.docx; Health and Safety Manual.msg; RE Vehicle replacement request procedure.msg; FINAL TLC Contract Language.docx</i></p> <p>BFRM submitted Revised definition of an “active timber harvest” that was used to update NYBFRM Health and Safety Manual in August 2018 along with the email message informing staff of the revision. The Memo from Director of the Division of Lands and Forestry reminds and directs staff to use the vehicle replacement procedure (<i>RE Vehicle replacement request</i>) and a reminder of staff responsibilities for reporting and seeking resolution of mechanical issues with vehicles.</p>
<p><b>SCS review</b></p>	<p>9/11/2018 review: There were two parts to this finding.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowledge and use of PPE – BFRM revised the health and safety manual to include the definition of “active timber sales” and clarified PPE whether required (R), recommended (r), or suggested (*). During the 2018 audit field visits, field staff PPE use, and forestry staff interviews in the field confirmed: 1) staff knowledge, and 2) implementation of PPE requirements for active timber sales.</li> <li>2. Maintaining working vehicles - Review of the materials, inspections of vehicles used in the field, and interviews with staff confirmed the BFRM has revised and implemented procedures appropriate to address these issues.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Status of CAR:</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed  <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major  <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other decision (refer to description above)</i></p>

<b>Finding Number: 2017.3</b>	
<b>Select one:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Observation	
<b>FMU CAR/OBS issued to</b> (when more than one FMU):	
<b>Deadline</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification/recertification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 months or next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Observation – response is optional <input type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
<b>FSC Indicator:</b>	FSC US FM 7.3.a
<b>Non-Conformity</b> (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations): <p>This indicator requires that loggers and other operators participate in informal and formal training, such as Forest Industry Safety Training Alliance, Game of Logging and similar programs. The BFRM requires harvest operators be certified through the Trained Logger Certification (TLC) program. Details for this program may be found here, <a href="http://www.newyorkloggertraining.org/">http://www.newyorkloggertraining.org/</a>. An incident was reported that identifies a gap in the BFRM process. BFRM Timber contracts require a TLC logger be present on-site during harvest operations. A TLC logger, although confirmed as certified prior to start of the logging job, left the job site leaving only a Trainee logger. An injury occurred and subsequent investigation discovered the logger certification had expired.</p>	
<b>Corrective Action Request</b> (or Observation): <p>Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plan. Workers must be qualified to properly implement the management plan; all forest workers are provided with sufficient guidance and supervision to adequately implement their respective components of the plan.</p>	
<b>FME response</b> (including any evidence submitted)	<p><u>Documents submitted:</u> <i>Timber Sale Inspection MEMO FINAL.docx;</i>  <i>tlctrackingform.docx</i></p> <p>BFRM provided a memo and tracking form that was sent to staff on 12/15/17. A portion of the Timber Sale Inspection memo states, in part, <i>“In the future, please be aware that the status of all contractors’ TLC certification should be tracked throughout the life of a timber sale contract to ensure they maintain their certification. This documentation should be maintained as part of the sale file and should be available upon request. There is a TLC tracking form (attached) posted on In-Site for your use. Additionally, the TLC tracking form is posted on our internal web site for staff to access.”</i></p> <p>BFRM revised the document, <i>“FINAL TLC Contract Language.docx”</i> to include language that specifically addresses the gap identified now requiring loggers be certified <i>“Any person who will perform any duties related to the felling, handling and removal of trees under this contract, hereunder referred to as “worker,” regardless of whether they are an employee or subcontractor of the Contractor, shall maintain current (non-expired) certification under a Sustainable Forestry Initiative State Implementation Committee (SFI SIC) approved training program or equivalent program which includes a continuing education component, for the duration of the timber sale contract.”</i></p>
<b>SCS review</b>	This was largely a procedural gap and the review of the documents and evidence submitted were sufficient to address the identified gap for confirming logger

	training/certifications and specified how they would be maintained throughout the duration of harvest jobs. Staff was provided tools for tracking certifications, and finally, implementation was confirmed by interviews with staff.
<b>Status of CAR:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)

<b>Finding Number: 2017.4</b>	
<b>Select one:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Observation	
<b>FMU CAR/OBS issued to</b> (when more than one FMU):	
<b>Deadline</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification/recertification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 months or next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Observation – response is optional <input type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
<b>FSC Indicator:</b>	FSC US FM 8.2.d.1
<p><b>Non-Conformity</b> (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations):</p> <p>Isolated and minor situations were observed during this audit around BMPs. Examples of BMP issues observed in the field included non-conforming stump heights, cross-drains, and water bars (across two Regions). Stumps heights did not follow contract requirements and although interviews describe measures taken with the logger to correct the issue, it was not documented (Contract # X010426). Further reviews across several Regions discovered inconsistent recording measures taken by forestry staff and overall insufficient documentation for monitoring purposes. Issues with cross-drains (X010426, X010432) and water bars (X010426, X010313) were noted.</p> <p>Completion Reports, which are evidence of ensuring BMP conformance where harvest operations take place, were not supplied when requested. For example, the BFRM was not able to provide a Completion Report for Pittstown State Forest: Stand C-9.</p>	
<p><b>Corrective Action Request</b> (or Observation):</p> <p>Monitoring is conducted to ensure that site specific plans and operations are properly implemented, environmental impacts of site disturbing operations are minimized, and that harvest prescriptions and guidelines are effective. Short-term impacts must be monitored during and at the close of operations. Long-term impacts must be monitored at an appropriate length of time after the operation to ensure that protection measures (e.g., water bars) are stable and functioning until protection measures are determined to be stable and effective.</p>	
<b>FME response</b> (including any evidence submitted)	<p><u>Documents:</u> timbersaleinspectionlog[1].pdf; Timber Sale Inspection MEMO FINAL.docx</p> <p>Timber Sale Inspection Memo states, in part, “Please be aware that all timber sale inspections should be documented, and this documentation should be available upon request There is no required format, however, several regions have provided examples of how inspections are documented. These inspection templates will be posted on In-Site for staff to use if they choose. Additionally, a copy of the Timber Sale Completion and Inspection Report should be placed in the sale folder at the</p>

	<i>close of a timber sale.”</i> The Timber Sale Inspection Log is posted on our internal website for staff to access.
<b>SCS review</b>	Although the inspection log and TS Inspection memo provided direction for field foresters the core part of corrective actions were: 1) plans and field operations are properly implemented, 2) harvest prescriptions and BMP protections and actions are monitored and confirmed as effective by staff were confirmed in the field. The key evidence for this finding was consistent production of the Completion Reports and observations of conformance with BMP standards in the field. Field site visits discovered no non-conformities with BMP requirements and observed 100% documentation of Completion Reports.
<b>Status of CAR:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other decision (refer to description above)</i>

<b>Finding Number: 2017.5</b>	
<b>Select one:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Observation	
<b>FMU CAR/OBS issued to</b> (when more than one FMU):	
<b>Deadline</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification/recertification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 months or next audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Observation – response is optional <input type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
<b>FSC Indicator:</b>	FSC-STD-50-001, 1.15
<b>Non-Conformity</b> (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations): The standard timber sale contract template used by the NY BFRM includes the use of “FSC” without the corresponding trademark symbol. The BFRM website and all other reviewed materials and documents used correct trademark symbology.	
<b>Corrective Action Request</b> (or Observation): The use of the FSC “checkmark-and-tree” logo shall be directly accompanied by the trademark symbols ® or ™ (in superscript font). The symbol, which represents the registration status of an FSC trademark in the country in which FSC certified products or materials are to be distributed, is an intrinsic part of the logo. The appropriate symbol shall also be added to “FSC” or “Forest Stewardship Council” for the first use in any text. The registration status of the FSC trademarks for the US is listed in Annex 1.	
<b>FME response</b> (including any evidence submitted)	The BFRM provided the revised Notice of Sale template with the proper FSC trademarks. Additionally, FME attached SCS logo approval request.
<b>SCS review</b>	SCS review confirmed revisions were sufficient and logo approvals appropriate to close this CAR. Final version of the template was made available to staff and confirmed as implemented during the audit.
<b>Status of CAR:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other decision (refer to description above)</i>

#### 4.4 New Corrective Action Requests and Observations

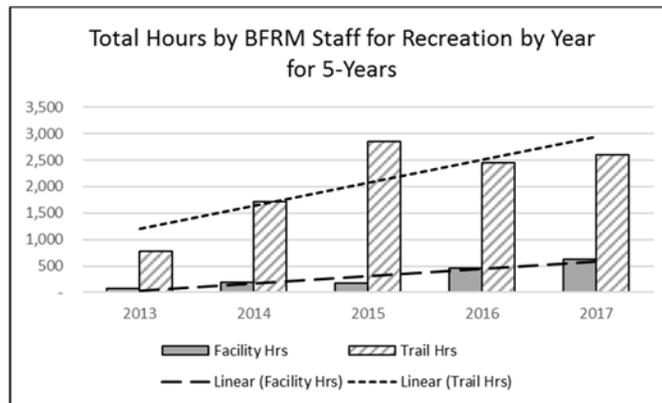
<b>Finding Number: Minor 2018.1</b>	
<b>Select one:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Observation	
<b>FMU CAR/OBS issued to</b> (when more than one FMU):	
<b>Deadline</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification/recertification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 months or next regularly scheduled audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Observation – response is optional <input type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
<b>FSC Indicator:</b>	Indicator 1.5.a The forest owner or manager supports or implements measures intended to prevent illegal and unauthorized activities on the Forest Management Unit (FMU).
<p><b>Non-Conformity</b> (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations):</p> <p>The New York State Bureau of Forest Resource Management (NY BFRM) has an effective system to prevent illegal and unauthorized activities on BFRM managed lands. The state lands are organized by Region within which there may be several Offices. The BFRM produces Unit Management Plans (UMPs) for defined areas that may include up to several Regions and associated offices, <a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4979.html">http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4979.html</a>. Each UMP presents known cases of disputes over property ownership and/or property rights and efforts to resolve them. Boundary lines are maintained (inspected during 2018 field site visits), and the audit confirmed that signs are posted and maintained for delineating ownership. Gated roads and trails are common for controlling access to lands. BFRM staff work cooperatively with local law enforcement agencies when trespass or other illegal or unauthorized activities occur. The BFRM maintains support from conservation officers and rangers who patrol the FME and from legal counsel on staff. All of which demonstrate systemic conformity to this indicator.</p> <p>However, in review of the BFRM special permitting system, or Temporary Revocable Permit (TRP), for recreational or other public events, it was discovered that the permit terms, requiring 48 hours’ notice to designated BFRM staff, is not always followed, nor is the failure to notify enforced by BFRM. At the site “R5: Peck Hill State Forest Willie Marsh and UNH Beech Research TRP” (see Site Notes within this report), it was found that a cooperating educational institution, for whom a TRP had been issued a permit for research purposes, failed to notify the forester before commencing activities which resulted in incorrect trees being impacted, essentially an unauthorized activity occurring on the site. During follow-up interviews with staff, it was determined to be relatively common for this notification requirement to be omitted by permittees, and that there were multiple instances of no enforcement by BFRM staff when such omissions occur. This requirement for 48 hours’ notice was described as supporting public safety goals, and ensuring any specific permit conditions are followed, that may apply towards preventing unauthorized or illegal activities. This does not result in a fundamental failure of forest protection activities, which justifies the grading of this finding as a Minor CAR.</p>	
<p><b>Corrective Action Request</b> (or Observation):</p> <p>BFRM must implement measures that prevent illegal and unauthorized activities from occurring on the FMU, or certified state forest lands including recreational, research, and other types of public activities. Development and use of TRPs must consistently support measures to prevent illegal and unauthorized activities from occurring.</p>	

<b>FME response</b> <i>(including any evidence submitted)</i>	
<b>SCS review</b>	
<b>Status of CAR:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)

<b>Finding Number: Minor 2018.2</b>	
<b>Select one:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Observation	
<b>FMU CAR/OBS issued to</b> (when more than one FMU):	
<b>Deadline</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification/recertification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 months or next regularly scheduled audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Observation – response is optional <input type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
<b>FSC Indicator:</b>	5.1.a The forest owner or manager is financially able to implement core management activities, including all those environmental, social and operating costs, required to meet this Standard, and investment and reinvestment in forest management.
<b>Non-Conformity</b> (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations):	
<p>New York State is solvent and capable of systematically implementing core management activities through the Bureau of Forest Resource Management based on reviews of budgeting process, revenues and fees, and budgeted expenditures prior to the 2018 field audit. However, there have been numerous retirements in recent years, and although some positions have been filled, others are on hold for budgetary considerations.</p> <p>A 20% vacancy rate was reported for one Region during the 2018 audit, and analysis of state-wide vacancy rates showed the same level, approximately 20%, of vacancy state-wide for <del>open and approved</del> <del>“Critical Fill”</del> Forester and Forestry Technician positions. Additionally, there is a high rate of turnover for seasonal temporary employees who also conduct critical forestry functions that serve to meet requirements of this standard. Seasonal temporary employees are reported to depart BFRM employment due to low wages, or better pay-rates and opportunities in other states. Ultimately, budget levels or authorization from budget-related, decision-makers directly impact staffing levels. Various forest management activities - environmental, social and operational - are all sustained by appropriate capacity of qualified and competent forestry staff.</p> <p>Supporting Detail:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current vacancies for BFRM forestry staff (relevant to nearly every indicator of the FSC US FM standard): Out of 47 Forester 1’s, there are 6 vacant, there is current 1 vacant Forestry Tech 2 position.</li> <li>Support in forest inventory, regeneration monitoring and other forestry tasks related to certification is provided by seasonal, temporary forestry trainees. The BFRM maintains a range of 13 - 17 forestry trainee positions each year. There are 4 to 5 seasonal employees that leave employment <i>annually</i>.</li> </ol>	

This constitutes a turnover rate of 20%-25% per year. Because these are positions that require some specialized training to ensure minimum quality standards are met, turnover may represent significant loss in program functionality each year and continued loss of time by permanent staff through repeatedly training new employees each year. Interviews also assert that there may be, at times, quality issues for such tasks as forest inventory and regeneration monitoring.

3. Current vacancies for staff that supply critical supporting functions for forest management activities (relevant for indicator 1.5.a): Real Property (Total positions – unfilled): 7 Land Surveyor – 2 currently with an approved Critical Fill, 2 Real Estate Specialist 1 – 1 currently with an approved Critical Fill, 3 Real Estate Specialist 2 – 2 currently have an approved Critical Fill, 3 Assistant Land Surveyor 2 – 0 current approved Critical Fill, 4 Assistant Land Surveyor 3 - 0 current approved Critical Fill
4. At the same time, general forestry positions have been vacated, demands of forester time have been increasing for recreational job duties including work on recreational facilities and trails. Recent trend analysis for a 5-year period, 2013-2017 shows an overall increasing trend of hours demanded for completing recreational tasks.



The above chart is based on the table below which shows nearly a 4-fold increase from 2013 to 2017.

Year	Facility Hrs	Trail Hrs	Total
2013	78	779	857
2014	187	1,711	1,898
2015	172	2,850	3,022
2016	462	2,456	2,918
2017	628	2,593	3,221

Finally, BFRM’s timber program has already demonstrated the impact of increasing staff. Production, in terms of acres prepared for timber harvest, was increased by the addition of staff between 2015 and 2016. Through a unique and innovative Timber Initiative program, the BFRM production in 2015 was approximately 7,000 acres sold, this increased to 8,000 acres sold in 2016, through the temporary addition of 11 forestry staff, funded through the initiative, who were devoted strictly to timber sale preparation tasks. However, in 2017 timber sold acres reduced to 7,000 acres after staff reductions occurred through retirement and other sources of attrition essentially canceling out gains made through the Timber Initiative.

Capacity of qualified forestry staff has a direct impact on the BFRM’s ability to respond to increasing demands of public recreation and meeting core forest management goals. New York State is financially

solvent and BFRM is systematically implemented core management activities is justification for rating this as a Minor non-conformity.	
<b>Corrective Action Request (or Observation):</b> The BFRM must be able to sustain implementation of core management activities, including all environmental, social and operating costs required to meet this Standard. This includes investment and reinvestment in forest management and capacity to conduct such management through the provision of competent, qualified forestry staff at appropriate levels. The BFRM must demonstrate that their management system is able to assess increasing program requirements and demands and balance those with appropriate adjustments to forest management and/or forest recreation staffing levels including, but not limited to, filling currently open, approved Critical Fill positions.	
<b>FME response</b> <i>(including any evidence submitted)</i>	
<b>SCS review</b>	
<b>Status of CAR:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)

<b>Finding Number: OBS 2018.3</b>	
<b>Select one:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation	
<b>FMU CAR/OBS issued to</b> (when more than one FMU):	
<b>Deadline</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification/recertification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 months or next regularly scheduled audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Observation – response is optional <input type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
<b>FSC Indicator:</b>	5.1.b. Responses to short-term financial factors are limited to levels that are consistent with fulfillment of this Standard.
<b>Non-Conformity (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations):</b> Overall, auditors determined that the BFRM personnel maintain a continuous, regulated forest management program within a budgeting system that is relatively stable. Budgeting is determined on a statewide basis under the directives of the Governor’s Division of Budget in cooperation with BFRM budgeting and administrative staff. Within the framework of the program, forests are regenerated using both natural seed sources, resprouting, and planted tree seedlings designed to either maintain or enhance tree species goals within forest stands. Conifer forest cover types are, in certain situations, retained to contribute to both forest products market diversity and biological diversity as habitat for wildlife and plants.  However, during forestry staff interviews, it was discovered that there is inconsistent to poor understanding by field staff of the budgeting process specifically as related to planting funds. Understanding by staff is generally that budgeting for purchasing seedling stock comes from a set of defined funds. However, when such funding may be unavailable, for a variety of reasons, field staff is unaware there are other options or alternatives available for acquiring and planting seedling stock as planned in forest prescriptions. This was evaluated as a lapse that has not resulted in failing seedling	

<p>program objectives which were met in the cases encountered during audits, thus justifying the grading of this findings as an Observation.</p>	
<p><b>Corrective Action Request</b> (or Observation):                  The BFRM should ensure that responses to short-term financial, or budgetary, fluctuations and their implications are understood by forestry staff responsible for seedling planting activities intended to restock stands towards achieving desired future forest conditions.</p>	
<p><b>FME response</b>                  (including any evidence submitted)</p>	
<p><b>SCS review</b></p>	
<p><b>Status of CAR:</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major <input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)

<p><b>Finding Number: OBS 2018.4</b></p>	
<p>Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Major CAR    <input type="checkbox"/> Minor CAR    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observation</p>	
<p><b>FMU CAR/OBS issued to</b> (when more than one FMU):</p>	
<p><b>Deadline</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-condition to certification/recertification <input type="checkbox"/> 3 months from Issuance of Final Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 months or next regularly scheduled audit (surveillance or re-evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Observation – response is optional <input type="checkbox"/> Other deadline (specify):
<p><b>FSC Indicator:</b></p>	<p>5.6.c. Rates and methods of timber harvest lead to achieving desired conditions and improve or maintain health and quality across the FMU. Overstocked stands and stands that have been depleted or rendered to be below productive potential due to natural events, past management, or lack of management, are returned to desired stocking levels and composition at the earliest practicable time as justified in management objectives.</p>
<p><b>Non-Conformity</b> (or Background/ Justification in the case of Observations):                  Desired future forest condition, as defined by the BFRM within the state-wide Strategic Forest Management Plan, includes the creation and maintenance of a variety of age and size classes across the landscape within healthy high-quality stands. Desired stocking levels and composition were observed throughout the audit in the Regions audited in 2018. BFRM’s analyses on progress towards this has determined that young forest age classes are underrepresented in the landscape. The BFRM has taken steps to increase forest management activities designed to generate more young forest stands with support by the Timber and Young Forests Initiatives within state forests.</p> <p>Ensuring sustainable harvest levels within this framework relies, in part, upon state- and region-wide modeling estimates of growth in forest stands with sustainability objectives, including the goal that more forest volume is growing than is being cut Region- and state-wide.</p> <p>However, modeling results from the last Periodic Annual Increment (PAI, 2015), in Region 3, shows stands experiencing negative growth rates. This reflects unharvested stands declining in growth rate, which may be attributable to such causes as mortality events, senescing stands, or other factors that contribute to</p>	

<p>apparent reductions in stand growth. In follow-up interviews with modeling contractors, it was determined that methods used to account for ingrowth and mortality in estimated periodic annual increments of stand volume growth or loss are not clear. Further, methods used to validate quality of forest inventory and growth, which serve as data source for growth, yield, and sustainability modeling, are also unclear.</p> <p>Current tree volume <i>growth</i> on applicable state lands are estimated to be well above actual and projected harvest volumes. From this, auditors concluded that there is low- risk of over-harvesting on a state-wide or Regional basis. However, it is not clear how BFRM is accounting for potential impacts on stand productivity, stocking, and quality of growth by mortality; nor is it clear how forest inventory data is being validated for modeling efforts. There is conformance to this indicator however the interpretations of modeling data would be greatly strengthened by clarifying how ingrowth and mortality are accounted for in data sources and how growth data are being validated.</p>	
<p><b>Corrective Action Request (or Observation):</b>                  The BFRM should clarify data sources and methods of validation for growth calculations that are clear in supporting assertions that rates and methods of timber harvest will lead to improving or maintaining health and quality of forest stands across the New York State FMU covered by this certificate. This in turn supports assertions of adequate restocking in such stands that may be overstocked, may have been depleted or rendered to be below productive potential due to natural events, past management, or lack of management.</p>	
<p><b>FME response</b>                  (including any evidence submitted)</p>	
<p><b>SCS review</b></p>	
<p><b>Status of CAR:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Closed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Upgraded to Major</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other decision (refer to description above)</p>

## 5. Stakeholder Comments

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

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

Stakeholder consultation activities are organized to give participants the opportunity to provide comments according to general categories of interest based on the three FSC chambers, as well as the SCS Interim Standard, if one was used.

## 5.1 Stakeholder Groups Consulted

Principal stakeholder groups are identified based upon results from past evaluations, lists of stakeholders from the FME under evaluation, and additional stakeholder contacts from other sources. Stakeholder groups who are consulted as part of the evaluation include FME management and staff, consulting foresters, contractors, lease holders, adjacent property owners, local and regionally-based social interest and civic organizations, purchasers of logs harvested on FME forestlands, recreational user groups, tribal members and/or representatives, members of the FSC National Initiative, members of the regional FSC working group, FSC International, local and regionally-based environmental organizations and conservationists, and forest industry groups and organizations, as well as local, state, and federal regulatory agency personnel and other relevant groups.

## 5.2 Summary of Stakeholder Comments and Evaluation Team Responses

The table below summarizes the major comments received from stakeholders and the assessment team’s response. Where a stakeholder comment has triggered a subsequent investigation during the evaluation, the corresponding follow-up action and conclusions from SCS are noted below.

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>FME has not received any stakeholder comments from interested parties as a result of stakeholder outreach activities during this annual evaluation.</i>	
Stakeholder Comment	SCS Response
While NY BFRM has made progress in developing relationships with Native American groups, they must be careful about confusing informational exchange and relationship-building with true consultation, as they are different things.	The progress by the Bureau of Forest Resource Management (BFRM) related to consultation with Indigenous People is noted, see closure of Minor CAR 2017.1 for more detail, the BFRM has devoted newly designated staff towards support of local consultation for Unit Management Plan development, and supported some research being done, and will continue, in cooperation with limited Indigenous representatives towards building a broad and systematic consultation procedure to be implemented across the state. The BFRM acknowledges a goal to continue improvements in relationship building as well as separate goals of continuing to strengthen consultation efforts. Examples of local consultations were provided during the 2018 audit.
Boundaries lines could be drawn more often and clearer.	Inquiries made during the audit of forestry staff regarding property boundary markings confirmed that requests for boundary marking are currently in back log for state forest lands. However, property boundary marking is done by a DEC agency group outside of the BFRM. Property boundary marking is done by the Real Property Division (RPD). Understaffing within RPD was offered as a probable cause and understaffing within the BFRM and supporting positions was confirmed by review of staffing issues. <b>See Minor CAR 2018.4.</b>
Easements - conservation officers that are patrolling the area have no idea about easements. (Tug Hill Plateau,	BFRM staff acknowledged that such lack of knowledge may exist and points out that there are close to 1,000 easements representing nearly 1,000,000 acres across the state of New York. BFRM maintains that extensive and complete knowledge of all

northern part of Adirondack area.)	existing local easements is beyond the scope of Conservation Officer (CO) positions, with which FSC review and analysis concurs. Established CO's may be able to learn some details about local easements, but CO's may change to different areas throughout the state. After due consideration, no non-conformity is warranted.
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## 6. Certification Decision

The certificate holder has demonstrated continued overall conformance to the applicable Forest Stewardship Council standards. The SCS annual evaluation team recommends that the certificate be sustained, subject to subsequent annual evaluations and the FME's response to any open CARs.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrated commitment towards improving internal audits which was reflected in both internal audit methods and findings, which is to be commended.</li> <li>2. The development and subsequent implementation of the PROs GIS layer, which was developed by NY Natural Heritage program 2009-2010, is notable. The information was disseminated to forestry field staff, and numerous examples of implementation were observed in the field. Foresters, when interviewed at field sites, demonstrated a strong level of understanding of the information conveyed, and were using the data consistently. Innovation in developing field tools for comprehensive natural heritage review, with consistent and routine use in the field, is commendable.</li> </ol>	

## 7. Annual Data Update

<input type="checkbox"/> No changes since previous evaluation.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information in the following sections has changed since previous evaluation. <i>SEE BELOW</i>

The NY Department of Environmental Conservation initiated a new program over the last two years, the Bureau of Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health (BISEH), Division of Lands and Forests with Justin Perry as the Chief.

The BISEH provides expertise, assistance and action across the state where invasive species are a threat. BISEH collaborates with numerous stakeholders including State and Federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, industry and notably through Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISMs). The mission of BISEH, "The mission of the Bureau of Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health is to protect the health of New York's lands and waters from the native and exotic plants, pests and diseases, that pose a risk to the natural ecosystem and all people, plants and animals who rely on it.: The BISEH provides training, species-specific references and other support that benefit the BFRM including addressing those issues which may intersect with activities covered under this FSC FM standard.

For example, the BISEH is currently working with the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (DAM) on a draft Invasive Species Comprehensive Management Plan. The overarching goal of the plan is to minimize the introduction, establishment and spread of invasive species

throughout the State. They are currently accepted public comments on this document from May to June 2018.

For an overview on the Draft Invasive Species Comprehensive Management Plan, please view the presentation (PDF, 2.96 MB).

**Name and Contact Information**

<b>Organization name</b>	State of New York, DEC, Bureau of Forest Resource Management		
<b>Contact person</b>	Josh Borst, Forester 2, Bureau of Forest Resource Management, Division of Lands and Forests		
<b>Address</b>	625 Broadway, 5th Floor Albany, NY 12233-4255	<b>Telephone</b>	518-473-9209
		<b>Fax</b>	518-402-9028
		<b>e-mail</b>	joshua.borst@dec.ny.gov
		<b>Website</b>	www.dec.ny.gov

**FSC Sales Information**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>FSC Sales contact information same as above.</i>			
<b>FSC salesperson</b>			
<b>Address</b>		<b>Telephone</b>	
		<b>Fax</b>	
		<b>e-mail</b>	
		<b>Website</b>	

**Scope of Certificate**

<b>Certificate Type</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Single FMU	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple FMU
	<input type="checkbox"/> Group	
<b>SLIMF (if applicable)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Small SLIMF certificate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low intensity SLIMF certificate
	<input type="checkbox"/> Group SLIMF certificate	
<b># Group Members (if applicable)</b>		
<b>Number of FMUs in scope of certificate</b>	1	
<b>Geographic location of non-SLIMF FMU(s)</b>	Latitude & Longitude: 42.6529/-73.7491	
<b>Forest zone</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Boreal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Temperate
	<input type="checkbox"/> Subtropical	<input type="checkbox"/> Tropical
<b>Total forest area in scope of certificate which is:</b> Units: <input type="checkbox"/> ha or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ac		
privately managed	n/a	
state managed	780,384	
community managed	n/a	
<b>Number of FMUs in scope that are:</b>		
less than 100 ha in area	100 - 1000 ha in area	
1000 - 10 000 ha in area	more than 10 000 ha in area	1

<b>Total forest area in scope of certificate which is included in FMUs that:</b>		<b>Units:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> ha or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ac
are less than 100 ha in area	0	
are between 100 ha and 1000 ha in area	0	
meet the eligibility criteria as <i>low intensity</i> SLIMF FMUs	0	
<b>Division of FMUs into manageable units:</b>		
<p>The state lands under scope of this certificate are managed by the Bureau of Forest Resource Management, BFRM, under the auspices of the Department of Environmental Conservation. The BFRM is considered the Forest Management Entity, or FME. The FME maintains 9 regional offices located throughout the state of which 7 regional areas are certified. Within each region, the Division of Operations supports the Bureau of Forest Resource Management, BFRM, by providing technical services, facilities management, and maintenance of physical assets. The Bureau of Fish and Wildlife assists with developing management decisions to protect species and habitat. The Divisions of Law Enforcement and Forest Protection provide support through law enforcement, education and public outreach. The Bureau of Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health is a new Bureau within the Division of Lands and Forests that provides training, species guidance information, and other support for identifying and managing invasive species. Personnel from each Division are assigned to regional offices and collaborate to manage the Reforestation Areas, Multiple Use Areas, Unique Areas, and State Nature and Historic Preserves within the scope of this assessment.</p> <p>Land within each region is grouped into planning units. A Unit Management Plan is written for each unit and includes objectives and activities that are designed to accomplish specific management goals. This FME maintains 76 planning units.</p>		

**Social Information**

<b>Number of forest workers (including contractors) working in forest within scope of certificate (differentiated by gender):</b>		
Male workers: 57	Female workers: 13	
<b>Number of accidents in forest work since previous evaluation:</b>	Serious: 0	Fatal: 0

**Pesticide and Other Chemical Use**

<input type="checkbox"/> FME does not use pesticides.				
Commercial name of pesticide / herbicide	Active ingredient	Quantity applied annually (gallons)	Size of area treated during previous year (acres)	Reason for use
Accord	glyphosate	63.35	306.7	foliar spray to control undesirable hardwoods, invasives and ferns
Accord XRT II	glyphosate	154.92	1089.887	control striped maple, ironwood, musclewood, fern, honeysuckle,

				multiflora rose, and swallow-wort
Arsenal	glyphosate	14.98	429	hack and squirt to control undesirable hardwoods; treatment of japanese knotweed, beech, striped maple, and ironwood
Callisto	Mesotrione	4.15	86	Agriculture
Garlon 4	triclopyr	201.57	185	basal bark spray to control undesirable hardwoods
Garlon 4 Ultra	Triclopyr	52.35	116	Stump treatment to control re-sprouting of various tree species; Foliar spray to control swallowwart
Lannate LV	Nudrin Methomyl	4.88	13	Agriculture
Mad Dog	glyphosate	0.46	4	Foliar spray to control Phragmites and swallowwort
Makaze	Makaze	0.02	2	Agriculture
Metribuzin 75	Metribuzin	3 lbs	4	Agriculture
Microthiol	Disperess Sulfur	7 lbs	7	Agriculture
Oust	glyphosate	9.42	748.7	backpack, and hack and squirt on st. maple, ironwood, musclewood, and fern
Oust XP	sulfometuron methyl	1.20	181	foilar application for ferns
Outlook	Dimethenamid-P	9.75	101.5	Agriculture
Pathfinder II	Triclopyr	2.50	5	Cut stump treatment on HS, MFR, AB, SM
Polyram	Metiram	6 lbs	4	Agriculture
Quintec	Quinoline	0.43	11	Agriculture
Ranger Pro	imazapyr	38.33	44	hack and squirt application to control beech, ironwood and striped maple
Rodeo	glyphosate	217	1319	stem injection and foliar application on beech, striped maple, ironwood, swallow-wort, musclewood, honeysuckle, multiflora rose, barberry and ironwood
Rodeo - 2.5% solution	glyphosate	2.50	105	Cut stump treatment in water, to control re-sprout of undesirable species;
RoundUp Pro-Max	glyphosate	0.91	9	foliar spray to control beech, striped

				maple, honeysuckle, swallowwort, and m.f. rose
RoundupPro	Glyphosate	0.28	12	Treatment of beech
Strategy	Clomazone Ethalfuralin	4.13	11	Agriculture
Tank mix of - 7% Rodeo, 4floz/100 gal Escort XP, and 1% Polaris carried in Thinvert RTU	glyphosate / metsulfuron methyl methyl 2 / isopropylamine salt of imazapyr	19.55	12	Foliar spray to control Knotweed
Vivando	Metrafenone	1.32	11	Agriculture
Wrangler	Imidacloprid	0.31	4.0	Agriculture

### Production Forests

<b>Timber Forest Products</b>	<b>Units:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> ha or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ac
Total area of production forest (i.e. forest from which timber may be harvested)	687,000
Area of production forest classified as 'plantation'	-
Area of production forest regenerated primarily by replanting or by a combination of replanting and coppicing of the planted stems	20,000
Area of production forest regenerated primarily by natural regeneration, or by a combination of natural regeneration and coppicing of the naturally regenerated stems	650,000
<b>Silvicultural system(s)</b>	<b>Area under type of management</b>
Even-aged management	
Clearcut (clearcut size range 2-84 ac)	294
Shelterwood	118
Other:	4935
Uneven-aged management	
Individual tree selection	1321
Group selection	
Other:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (e.g. nursery, recreation area, windbreak, bamboo, silvo-pastoral system, agro-forestry system, etc.)	
The sustainable rate of harvest (usually Annual Allowable Harvest or AAH where available) of commercial timber (m <sup>3</sup> of round wood)	115,019 Mbf/year
<b>Non-timber Forest Products (NTFPs)</b>	
Area of forest protected from commercial harvesting of timber and managed primarily for the production of NTFPs or services	0
Other areas managed for NTFPs or services	0
Approximate annual commercial production of non-timber forest products included in the scope of the certificate, by product type	0
<b>Species in scope of joint FM/COC certificate: (Scientific / Latin Name and Common / Trade Name)</b>	

*Acer rubrum*, Red Maple; *Acer saccharum*, Sugar Maple; *Prunus serotina*, Black Cherry; *Quercus rubra*, Red Oak; *Quercus alba*, White Oak; *Fraxinus americana*, White Ash; *Tsuga canadensis*, Eastern Hemlock; *Abies balsamea*, Balsam Fir; *Larix laricina*, Eastern Larch; *Picea abies* Norway Spruce; *Pinus strobus*, White Pine; *Pinus resinosa*, Red Pine; *Picea rubens*, Red Spruce

**FSC Product Classification**

Timber products		
Product Level 1	Product Level 2	Species
Logs W1	W1.1	Refers to species list above
Fuelwood W1	W1.2	Refers to species list above
Non-Timber Forest Products		
Product Level 1	Product Level 2	Product Level 3 and Species

**Conservation and High Conservation Value Areas**

Total area of forest and non-forest land protected from commercial harvesting of timber and managed primarily for conservation objectives	82,000 ac (within the scope of this certificate) Note: Total conservation and HCV areas may differ since these may serve different functions in the FME’s management system. Designation as HCV may allow for active management. Conservation areas are typically under passive management, but may undergo invasive species control, prescribed burns, and other management activities intended to maintain or enhance their integrity. In all cases, figures are reported by the FME as it pertains local laws & regulations, management objectives, and FSC requirements.		
High Conservation Value Forest / Areas			
Code	HCV Type	Description & Location	Area
HCV1	Forests or areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia).	<b>Special Treatment:</b> New York Natural Heritage Element Occurrences (non-community type only) with survey dates between 1990-2013 with a state “rarity” rank of S1, S2, and S1S2. Clipped to State Forests	8,787
HCV2	Forests or areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.		2,865,284
HCV3	Forests or areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems.	<b>Rare Community:</b> New York Natural Heritage Element Occurrences (community type only) with survey dates	9,061

		between 1990-2013 with a state “rarity” rank of S1, S2, and S1S2. Clipped to State Forests	
HCV4	Forests or areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g. watershed protection, erosion control).	<b>Watershed:</b> Portions of State Forests that overlay Sole and Primary Source Aquifers, have public water supply intakes downstream within the Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 12 watershed or are within the Department of Health Source Water Assessment Program Plan (DOH SWAPP) delineated buffers (zone of influence) around public ground water wells that are surface water influenced.	122,872
HCV5	Forests or areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g. subsistence, health).	<b>Cultural Heritage:</b> Currently over 825 point locations that are delineated on the ground by forestry/field staff representing any number of culturally significant/historic sites in our state land assets data set.	n/a
HCV6	Forests or areas critical to local communities’ traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).	<b>Cultural Heritage:</b> Currently over 825 point locations that are delineated on the ground by forestry/field staff representing any number of culturally significant/historic sites in our state land assets data set.	
<b>Total area of forest classified as ‘High Conservation Value Forest / Area’</b>			~ 3,000,000**

\*\* HCV2 and total acres representing FSC “High Conservation Value Forests” includes NY “Forest Preserve” acres (2,865,284 acres) that do not fall under this FSC certified FMU due to their unique land designation and limited management potential precluding them from any forest management certification.

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

<input type="checkbox"/> N/A – All forestland owned or managed by the applicant is included in the scope.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicant owns and/or manages other FMUs not under evaluation.

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Applicant wishes to excise portions of the FMU(s) under evaluation from the scope of certification.</i>		
<b>Explanation for exclusion of FMUs and/or excision:</b>	<p>New York State owns and manages 2,800,000 acres of Forever Wild Forests within the Adirondack Forest Preserve and 300,000 acres within the Catskill Forest Preserve. These acreages are part of a preserve system where harvesting is not allowed and excluded from this certificate.</p> <p>Additional acreages located on Long Island are not harvested and are not included within this certificate.</p>	
<b>Control measures to prevent mixing of certified and non-certified product (C8.3):</b>	<p>Harvesting does not take place in the excluded acreages as they are reserves or otherwise incur no harvests.</p>	
<b>Description of FMUs excluded from, or forested area excised from, the scope of certification:</b>		
<b>Name of FMU or Stand</b>	<b>Location (city, state, country)</b>	<b>Size (<input type="checkbox"/> ha or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ac)</b>
Adirondack Forest Preserve	NY, USA	2,800,000
Catskill Forest Preserve	NY, USA	300,000
NY DEC Region 1	Suffolk County, NY, USA	16,218
NY DEC Region 2	Bronx, Richmond and Queens Counties (Long Island), NY, USA	770

## SECTION B – APPENDICES (CONFIDENTIAL)

### Appendix 1 – List of FMUs Selected for Evaluation

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

### Appendix 2 – Staff and Stakeholders Consulted

#### List of FME Staff Consulted

State Land Managers Contact	Title	Location	Phone #	E-mail
Dave Smith	Forester 3	Watertown	(315)-785-2263	<a href="mailto:david.smith@dec.ny.gov">david.smith@dec.ny.gov</a>
Keith Rivers	Forester 2	Lowville	315-376-3521	<a href="mailto:keith.rivers@dec.ny.gov">keith.rivers@dec.ny.gov</a>
Ed Sykes	Forester 1	Lowville	315-376-3521	<a href="mailto:edwin.sykes@dec.ny.gov">edwin.sykes@dec.ny.gov</a>
Andrea Mercurio	Forester 1	Lowville	315-376-3521	<a href="mailto:andrea.mercurio@dec.ny.gov">andrea.mercurio@dec.ny.gov</a>
Dora Rednor	Seasonal FT 1	Lowville	315-376-3521	<a href="mailto:dora.redner@dec.ny.gov">dora.redner@dec.ny.gov</a>
Scott Glenn	Forest Tech 3	Lowville	315-376-3521	<a href="mailto:scott.glenn@dec.ny.gov">scott.glenn@dec.ny.gov</a>
Andy Blum	Forester 1	Sherburne	(607) 674-4017	<a href="mailto:andrew.blum@dec.ny.gov">andrew.blum@dec.ny.gov</a>
Andy Goeller	Forester 3	Sherburne	(607) 674-4017	<a href="mailto:andrew.goeler@dec.ny.gov">andrew.goeler@dec.ny.gov</a>
John Clancy	Forester 2	Cortland	(607) 753-3095	<a href="mailto:john.clancy@dec.ny.gov">john.clancy@dec.ny.gov</a>
Christine (Tina) Elliot	Forestry Tech 2	Cortland	(607) 753-3095	<a href="mailto:christine.elliott@dec.ny.gov">christine.elliott@dec.ny.gov</a>
Dan Little	Forester 1	Cortland	(607) 753-3095	<a href="mailto:daniel.little@dec.ny.gov">daniel.little@dec.ny.gov</a>
Jacob (Jake) Murphy	Forestry Tech 1	Cortland	(607) 753-3095	<a href="mailto:jacob.Murphy@dec.ny.gov">jacob.Murphy@dec.ny.gov</a>
Travis Petit	Forestry Tech 2	Cortland	(607) 753-3095	<a href="mailto:travis.petit@dec.ny.gov">travis.petit@dec.ny.gov</a>
Mike Mulligan	Forester 2	Northville	(518) 863-4545 Ext3002	<a href="mailto:michael.mulligan@dec.ny.gov">michael.mulligan@dec.ny.gov</a>
Seth Thomas	Forester 1	Northville	(518)863-4545	<a href="mailto:Seth.Thomas@dec.ny.gov">Seth.Thomas@dec.ny.gov</a>
Kristofer Alberga	Forester 3	Ray Brook	(518) 897-1281	<a href="mailto:Kristofer.Alberga@dec.ny.gov">Kristofer.Alberga@dec.ny.gov</a>
Ben Thomas	Forester 2	Warrensburg	(518) 623-1268	<a href="mailto:Benjamin.Thomas@dec.ny.gov">Benjamin.Thomas@dec.ny.gov</a>
Rich McDermott	Forester 1	Warrensburg	(518) 623-1270	<a href="mailto:Richard.McDermott@dec.ny.gov">Richard.McDermott@dec.ny.gov</a>
Rebecca Terry	Forester Trainee 1	Warrensburg	(518) 623-	<a href="mailto:rebecca.terry@dec.ny.gov">rebecca.terry@dec.ny.gov</a>
Josh Borst	Forester 2	Albany	(518) 473-9209	<a href="mailto:joshua.borst@dec.ny.gov">joshua.borst@dec.ny.gov</a>
Barbara Lucas-Wilson	Forester 3	Albany	(518) 402-9415	<a href="mailto:barbara.lucas-wilson@dec.ny.gov">barbara.lucas-wilson@dec.ny.gov</a>
Rob Messenger	Forester 4	Albany	(518) 402-9433	<a href="mailto:robert.messenger@dec.ny.gov">robert.messenger@dec.ny.gov</a>

**List of other Stakeholders Consulted\***

Name	Organization	Contact Information	Consultation method	Requests Cert. Notf.
Catherine Landis	Graduate Student, Center for Native Peoples and Environment (CNPE), SUNY-ESF	SUNY-ESF Center for Native Peoples 354 Illick Hall 1 Forestry Drive Syracuse, NY 13210	Face-to-face	Y
Neil Patterson Jr.	Assistant Director, CNPE, SUNY-ESF	SUNY-ESF Center for Native Peoples 354 Illick Hall 1 Forestry Drive Syracuse, NY 13210	Face-to-face	Y
Annabel Roberts-McMichael	Student Intern, CNPE, SUNY-ESF	SUNY-ESF Center for Native Peoples 354 Illick Hall 1 Forestry Drive Syracuse, NY 13210	Face-to-face	Y
Tim Burpoe	NY SFI, State Implementation Committee	Property Manager 41 St. Bernard Street, Suite 2 Saranac Lake, NY 12983	Email	N
Anonymous - Two SH comments received anonymously through ASI witness auditors who conducted a separate consultation.	Records maintained by Accredited Services International.	Martin Walter <m.walter@accreditation-services.com>	Phone	N

\* Note: SCS may maintain additional records of stakeholder consultation activities (e.g., email notifications) in its recordkeeping system. Stakeholders included in Appendix 2 have given their permission to include their name, contact details, and comments in the report. Anonymous stakeholders may have provided comments as a part of stakeholder outreach activities.

**Appendix 3 – Additional Evaluation Techniques Employed**

- None.
- Additional techniques employed (*describe*):

**Appendix 4 – Pesticide Derogations**

- There are no active pesticide derogations for this FME.

Name of pesticide / herbicide (active ingredient)		Date derogation approved
Condition	Conformance (C / NC)	Evidence of progress


### Appendix 5 – Forest Management Standard Conformance Table

Criteria required by FSC at every surveillance evaluation ( <i>check all situations that apply</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> NA – all FMUs are exempt from these requirements. <input type="checkbox"/> Plantations > 10,000 ha (24,710 ac): 2.3, 4.2, 4.4, 6.7, 6.9, 10.6, 10.7, and 10.8 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural forests > 50,000 ha (123,553 ac) ('low intensity' SLIMFs exempt): 1.5, 2.3, 3.2, 4.2, 4.4, 5.6, 6.2, 6.3, 8.2, and 9.4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FMUs containing High Conservation Values ('small forest' SLIMFs exempt): 6.2, 6.3, 6.9 and 9.4
Documents and records reviewed for FMUs/sites sampled	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All applicable documents and records as required in section 7 of audit plan were reviewed; or <input type="checkbox"/> The following documents and records as required in section 7 of the audit plan were NOT reviewed ( <i>provide explanation</i> ):

#### Requirements Reviewed in Annual Evaluation

Evaluation Year	Requirements Reviewed (FSC P&C Reviewed, FM/COC Indicators, Trademark Indicators, Group Standard Indicators, etc.)
2017	All – (Re)certification Evaluation
2018	P5, P8 and mandatory criteria above.
20XX	
20XX	
20XX	

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

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

REQUIREMENT	C/ NC	COMMENT/CAR
<b>Principle #1: Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles</b> Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.		
1.1 Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements.	NE	
1.2. All applicable and legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges shall be paid.	NE	
1.3. In signatory countries, the provisions of all binding international agreements such as CITES, ILO Conventions,	NE	

<p><b>ITTA, and Convention on Biological Diversity, shall be respected.</b></p>		
<p><b>1.4. Conflicts between laws, regulations and the FSC Principles and Criteria shall be evaluated for the purposes of certification, on a case by case basis, by the certifiers and the involved or affected parties.</b></p>	NE	
<p><b>1.5. Forest management areas should be protected from illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorized activities.</b></p>	C	
<p><b>1.5.a.</b> The forest owner or manager supports or implements measures intended to prevent illegal and unauthorized activities on the <i>Forest Management Unit</i> (FMU).</p>	C	<p>UMPs present known cases of disputes over property ownership and/or property rights and efforts to resolve them. Boundary lines are maintained (inspected in the field on several occasions), and appropriate signs are posted and maintained. Gated roads and trails are common. DEC has licensed surveyors on staff who assist with property boundary locations when there are questions regarding neighboring boundaries and as time allows.</p> <p>Gates and signs are used effectively to prevent unauthorized activities. Gates and signs were observed during on-site visits to regions visited in 2018. This FME maintains support from conservation officers and rangers who patrol the FME and from legal counsel.</p> <p>However, see <b>Minor CAR 2018.1</b> for more detail regarding concerns raised around Temporary Revocable Permits.</p>
<p><b>1.5.b.</b> If illegal or unauthorized activities occur, the forest owner or manager implements actions designed to curtail such activities and correct the situation to the extent possible for meeting all land management objectives with consideration of available resources.</p>	C	<p>Environmental Conservation Officers (ECOs) and Forest Rangers are available for enforcement and are well-staffed. DEC maintains a robust staff of attorneys in Central Office and Regional Offices to pursue illegal actions and conflicts.</p> <p>When timber trespass occurs, DEC pursued criminal prosecution. The FME reports no legal disputes occurring over the last year and none were discovered during research conducted prior to the audit.</p>
<p><b>1.6. Forest managers shall demonstrate a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria.</b></p>	NE	
<p><b>Principle #2: Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.</b></p>		
<p><b>2.1. Clear evidence of long-term forest use rights to the land (e.g., land title, customary rights, or lease agreements) shall be demonstrated.</b></p>	NE	

<p><b>2.2. Local communities with legal or customary tenure or use rights shall maintain control, to the extent necessary to protect their rights or resources, over forest operations unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.</b>  <i>Applicability Note: For the planning and management of publicly owned forests, the local community is defined as all residents and property owners of the relevant jurisdiction.</i></p>	NE	
<p><b>2.3. Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed to resolve disputes over tenure claims and use rights. The circumstances and status of any outstanding disputes will be explicitly considered in the certification evaluation. Disputes of substantial magnitude involving a significant number of interests will normally disqualify an operation from being certified.</b></p>	C	
<p><b>2.3.a</b> If <i>disputes</i> arise regarding tenure claims or use rights then the forest owner or manager initially attempts to resolve them through open communication, negotiation, and/or mediation. If these good-faith efforts fail, then federal, state, and/or local laws are employed to resolve such disputes.</p>	C	<p>Most tenure claims relate to property boundaries, but significant boundaries have all been surveyed and marked, so disputes usually are settled within the regions where the properties occur. If necessary, DEC has adequate legal staff to address more serious disputes. Bureau Chief related several examples of ongoing trespass disputes and their resolution.</p>
<p><b>2.3.b</b> The forest owner or manager documents any significant disputes over tenure and use rights.</p>	C	<p>Files that document past disputes are available in regional offices visited during the audit.</p>
<p><b>Principle #3: The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.</b></p>		
<p><b>3.1. Indigenous peoples shall control forest management on their lands and territories unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.</b></p>	NE	<p>Tribal forests are not included in this FMU.</p>
<p><b>3.2. Forest management shall not threaten or diminish, either directly or indirectly, the resources or tenure rights of indigenous peoples.</b></p>	C	
<p><b>3.2.a</b> 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.</p>	C	<p>Auditors interviewed David Witt in 2017 who is the Indian Nation Affairs Coordinator, Office of Environmental Justice. Among other initiatives, the DEC conducts annual meetings with Indian Nations.</p> <p>Audit team also consulted with Neil Patterson Jr., Assistant Director, Center for Native Peoples &amp; the Environment at SUNY-ESF.</p>
<p><b>3.2.b</b> Demonstrable actions are taken so that forest management does not adversely affect tribal resources. When applicable, evidence of, and measures for, protecting tribal resources are incorporated in the management plan.</p>	C	<p>See closure of Minor CAR 2017.1 for detail.</p>

<p><b>3.3. Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to indigenous peoples shall be clearly identified in cooperation with such peoples, and recognized and protected by forest managers.</b></p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p><b>3.4. Indigenous peoples shall be compensated for the application of their traditional knowledge regarding the use of forest species or management systems in forest operations. This compensation shall be formally agreed upon with their free and informed consent before forest operations commence.</b></p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p><b>Principle #4: Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.</b></p>		
<p><b>4.1. The communities within, or adjacent to, the forest management area should be given opportunities for employment, training, and other services.</b></p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p><b>4.2. Forest management should meet or exceed all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families.</b></p>	<p>C</p>	
<p><b>4.2.a</b> The forest owner or manager meets or exceeds all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families (also see Criterion 1.1).</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>NY State has a well-developed bureaucracy that establishes appropriate laws and regulations for safety, and there is, in general evidence of conformance by BFRM employees. For additional detail see closure of Minor CAR 2017.2 for additional detail.</p>
<p><b>4.2.b</b> The forest owner or manager and their employees and contractors demonstrate a safe work environment. Contracts or other written agreements include safety requirements.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Timber sale contracts and employee handbooks were examined during the audit to confirm that expectations for safety were specified. Auditors found consistency in the Notice of Sale requirements and compliance by the one contractor interviewed on site. See closure of Minor CAR 2017.2 for additional detail.</p>
<p><b>4.2.c</b> The forest owner or manager hires well-qualified service providers to safely implement the management plan.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Logging contractors are the most common service providers. They are selected through well-established bidding processes with detailed contract provisions. Trained Logger Certification is a requirement in Timber Sale Contracts. Interviews on-site and separate confirmations with logger training programs confirmed.</p>
<p><b>4.3 The rights of workers to organize and voluntarily negotiate with their employers shall be guaranteed as outlined in Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labor Organization (ILO).</b></p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p><b>4.4. Management planning and operations shall incorporate the results of evaluations of social impact. Consultations shall be maintained with people and groups (both men and women) directly affected by management operations.</b></p>	<p>C</p>	

<p><b>4.4.a</b> The forest owner or manager understands the likely social impacts of management activities, and incorporates this understanding into management planning and operations. Social impacts include effects on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Archeological sites and sites of cultural, historical and community significance (on and off the FMU;</li> <li>• Public resources, including air, water and food (hunting, fishing, collecting);</li> <li>• Aesthetics;</li> <li>• Community goals for forest and natural resource use and protection such as employment, subsistence, recreation and health;</li> <li>• Community economic opportunities;</li> <li>• Other people who may be affected by management operations.</li> </ul> <p>A summary is available to the CB.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>This FME completed a Summary Report of the New York State Social Impact Assessment of State Land Management during summer 2012 that was based on a survey of user groups. The FME also maintains a system for notifying the public, receiving comments and incorporating comments into management plans and proposed activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The social impacts associated with archeological sites are minimized through consultation with tribal groups and consultation with Chuck Vandrei, Historic Preservation Officer, for the Division of Lands and Forests who maintains a database of known cultural sites and provides this information to staff during the Unit Management Planning process. This information is also incorporated into a GIS data layer as confirmed during a demonstration of the GIS system. The Strategic Plan for SF Management (p. 137, 181) includes sections on archeological, cultural, historical and community resources.</li> <li>• The Strategic Plan for SF Management (for example p. 107, 181, 189-192) includes sections on air, water and subsistence resources. Each unit management plan incorporates local details into the text.</li> <li>• The Strategic Plan for SF Management (p. 125) and each unit management plan include a section on visual and aesthetic resources. Aesthetic considerations were specifically incorporated into roadside harvest operations observed during field visits such as the site examined with the Stewardship Agreements 17-05-WA-01 and 17-05-NO-01.</li> <li>• The Strategic Plan for SF Management (p. 181, 243) includes sections on supporting local communities. Each unit management plan incorporates local details into the text including for example the Six Nations Unit Management Plan (p. 81) that describes that gates on 2 roads continue to be opened for hunting season and a description for example fishing opportunities.</li> <li>• The Strategic Plan for SF Management (p. 243) includes a section on community economic opportunities. A variety of timber harvest project sizes are designed to provide local opportunities including for example smaller (“local”) sales that</li> </ul>
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		<p>were visited during this audit program in association with contract # X009187, X009000 and TX009305.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Strategic Plan for SF Management (for example p. 171-244) includes a section for example on public/permitted uses including for example universal access, motorized access for people with disabilities, formal and informal partnerships.</li> </ul> <p>The Summary Report of the New York State Social Impact Assessment of State Land Management includes a review of the likely social benefits and concerns of management activities.</p> <p>As a state agency, BFRM relies on input from the public and to assess social impacts of resource management. Social impacts are addressed in the <i>Strategic Plan</i>, and in detail as UMPs are revised. A summary can be found on public DEC web pages.</p>
<p><b>4.4.b</b> The forest owner or manager seeks and considers input in management planning from people who would likely be affected by management activities.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>This FME maintains a system for notifying the public for example of proposed management activities and planning documents in conformance with the requirements of 4.4.a and 4.4.b. This step is completed during the draft planning process and again in each final plan. Written comments and FME responses are incorporated into Unit Management Plan documents. FME responses were reviewed and reflected well on the agency’s ability to consider input effectively.</p> <p>BFRM seeks input from the public at all levels of planning, especially in development of Unit Management Plans (public process discussed during audit in Regions 3 and 5).</p> <p>Stakeholder comments and responses are found in appendices of each UMP. For example, the <i>Allegany County Unit Management Plan</i>, for the Towns of Alfred, Allen, Almond, Amity, Angelica, Belfast, Birdsall, Burns, Caneadea, Centerville, Friendship, Granger, Grove, New Hudson, Rushford, Ward, Wellsville, West Almond, and Willing, County of Allegany, January, 2016 includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Participation, page 7, describes the methods and value of solicitation of public input</li> <li>Formal and Informal Partnerships and Agreements, page 42, where the DEC gives their statement encouraging the development of</li> </ul>

		<p>cooperative and collaborative relationships that may be done through volunteer agreements with the department. DEC also provides more information on these and other partnerships, please see SPSFM page 181 at <a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/64567.html">http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/64567.html</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public use surveys are also used.</li> <li>• All of the comments received through the mechanisms listed above were summarized in Appendix A, <i>Public Comments Received During the Scoping Session</i>, page 127-167 covering the following categories: General, Habitat, Recreation, Tourism, Access, Trails (General, Equestrian, Snowmobile, Maintenance, Mountain Biking, Specific Trails), Wildlife General, Fishing, Hunting, Wildlife Management, Chestnut trees, ATV use and policies, Invasive Species, Habitat Management, and Resource Protection.</li> </ul> <p>Other UMPs examined during the 2018 audit and containing similar types of stakeholder input included: Onondaga, Fulton County, and Tug Hill East.</p>
<p><b>4.4.c</b> People who are subject to direct adverse effects of management operations are apprised of relevant activities in advance of the action so that they may express concern.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>This FME maintains a system for notifying the public for example of proposed management activities. This step is completed during the draft planning process and again in each final plan. Written comments and FME responses are incorporated into Unit Management Plan documents for example. FME responses were reviewed and confirmed the agency’s ability to consider input effectively.</p> <p>Foresters interviewed on site visits indicated that they use judgement in determining the level of contact with nearby landowners prior to any harvesting activities. Most commonly, landowners observe activities of foresters during sale layout and take the initiative to inquire about planned management. This was the case during the 2018 audit when foresters were interviewed.</p>
<p><b>4.4.d</b> For <i>public forests</i>, consultation shall include the following components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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;</li> <li>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;</li> </ol>	<p>C</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This FME maintains a system for notifying the public for example of proposed management activities and planning documents. This step is completed during the draft planning process and again in each final plan. A draft schedule of harvest plans is included within each draft and final unit management plan. Kiosks are also used in some SFs and provide an opportunity for users to provide a response directly to SF staff. SFs</li> </ol>

<p>3. An accessible and affordable appeals process to planning decisions is available.</p> <p>Planning decisions incorporate the results of public consultation. All draft and final planning documents, and their supporting data, are made readily available to the public.</p>		<p>offices are also open to the public and provide another accessible location for comment.</p> <p>2. This FME generally uses a 30-day public comment period as was confirmed for several of the UMP's examined during the 2018 audit and as described in 4.4.b, above.</p> <p>3. This FME's appeals processes are transparent and affordable. For example, the agency website includes a section for public involvement including links to "have a question?"; "make your voice heard"; "find out what is happening"; "public access to DEC documents" and "more about public involvement and news".</p> <p>Written comments and FME responses are incorporated into Unit Management Plan Appendix A. For example, the Allegheny Draft Plan FME responses were reviewed and reflected well on the agency's ability to consider input effectively. Draft unit management plans and final unit management plans are available electronically on the FME's website and in hard copy.</p> <p>See 4.4a-c: BFRM staff are aware of the importance of consulting with the public. The DEC has clearly defined processes for appeals from the public. All UMPs include summary of public comments and responses to them.</p>
<p><b>4.5. Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed for resolving grievances and for providing fair compensation in the case of loss or damage affecting the legal or customary rights, property, resources, or livelihoods of local peoples. Measures shall be taken to avoid such loss or damage.</b></p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p><b>Principle #5: Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.</b></p>		
<p><b>5.1. Forest management should strive toward economic viability, while taking into account the full environmental, social, and operational costs of production, and ensuring the investments necessary to maintain the ecological productivity of the forest.</b></p>	<p>C</p>	
<p><b>5.1.a</b> The forest owner or manager is financially able to implement core management activities, including all those environmental, social and operating costs, required to meet this Standard, and investment and reinvestment in forest management.</p>	<p>NC</p>	<p>Although New York State is generally solvent and capable of implementing core management activities, there have been numerous retirements in recent years. While some positions have been filled, others are on hold for budgetary considerations and awaiting authorizations. <b>See Minor CAR 2018.2</b> for more detail.</p>

<p><b>5.1.b</b> Responses to short-term financial factors are limited to levels that are consistent with fulfillment of this Standard.</p>	<p>C (OBS)</p>	<p>Even though BFRM was short-handed for several years during financial crises, existing personnel were still able to carry on operations consistent with the Standard. However, <b>see Observation 2018.3</b> for more detail.</p>
<p><b>5.2. Forest management and marketing operations should encourage the optimal use and local processing of the forest’s diversity of products.</b></p>	<p>C</p>	
<p><b>5.2.a</b> 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, guiding services, and other operations that are able to offer services at competitive rates and levels of service.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>All products sold from certified lands are offered on a bid basis after public advertisement and bidder notification. The only “products” sold from certified state lands include standing timber and leased rights to maple sap.</p>
<p><b>5.2.b</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.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Because DEC, by law, sells timber on the stump by bid, the agency has little say about the disposition of products. However, the variety of timber advertised for bid ensures a diversity of products and the use of Revenue and Local sales provides a mixture of sale sizes providing opportunities for small, medium, and large timber operations. A new initiative, the Softwood Prospectus, is an example of using DEC staff to develop and market use of an anticipated increase in availability of softwood forest types, based on forest inventory assessment and analyses, which is designed to optimize use of this resource once available.</p>
<p><b>5.2.c</b> On public lands where forest products are harvested and sold, some sales of forest products or contracts are scaled or structured to allow small business to bid competitively.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Sales less than \$10,000 are offered as “local sales”, as opposed to “revenue sales.” An operator of individually owned business was interviewed during the audit.</p>
<p><b>5.3. Forest management should minimize waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources.</b></p>		
<p><b>5.3.a</b> Management practices are employed to minimize the loss and/or waste of harvested forest products.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>BFRM’s <i>Notice of Sale</i> specifies proper use of products, confirmed by field visits where efficient use was noted.</p>
<p><b>5.3.b</b> Harvest practices are managed to protect residual trees and other forest resources, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• soil compaction, <b>rutting</b> and erosion are minimized;</li> <li>• residual trees are not significantly damaged to the extent that health, growth, or values are noticeably affected;</li> <li>• damage to NTFPs is minimized during management activities; and</li> </ul>	<p>C</p>	<p>BFRM’s <i>Notice of Sale</i> includes language to restrict rutting of soil, damage to residual trees, stone walls, recreational trails, etc. See Sections VI Log Landings; VII Access System; VII Harvesting for examples.  The field audit confirmed compliance with such conditions.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>techniques and equipment that minimize impacts to vegetation, soil, and water are used whenever feasible.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>5.4. Forest management should strive to strengthen and diversify the local economy, avoiding dependence on a single forest product.</b></p>		
<p><b>5.4.a</b> The forest owner or manager demonstrates knowledge of their operation’s effect on the local economy as it relates to existing and potential markets for a wide variety of timber and non-timber forest products and services.</p>	C	Interviews with staff in regional offices confirmed close connections with local stakeholders and concern for the local economy. Revenue versus local sales are designed specifically to ensure small sales are available for smaller operations.
<p><b>5.4.b</b> The forest owner or manager strives to diversify the economic use of the forest according to Indicator 5.4.a.</p>	C	The <i>Strategic Plan</i> (pages 245-248) addresses the topic of supporting local communities through a variety of uses of public land. An entire chapter (Chap. 5) addresses public uses. Several individual <i>Unit Management Plans</i> (UMPs) provide more specific information.
<p><b>5.5. Forest management operations shall recognize, maintain, and, where appropriate, enhance the value of forest services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.</b></p>		
<p><b>5.5.a</b> In developing and implementing activities on the FMU, the forest owner or manager identifies, defines and implements appropriate measures for maintaining and/or enhancing forest services and resources that serve public values, including municipal watersheds, fisheries, carbon storage and sequestration, recreation and tourism.</p>	C	All of the items in this indicator are addressed in the <i>Strategic Plan</i> , as would be expected for a public agency. Interviews with regional staff confirm an awareness of the many services to be provided by the lands they manage. For example, forest management activities observed in the field included examples of municipal watershed, fisheries management (Salmon fishery), regeneration of forests, production of long-lived lumber products, recreation trail and tourism all in the Salmon Falls SF.
<p><b>5.5.b</b> The forest owner or manager uses the information from Indicator 5.5.a to implement appropriate measures for maintaining and/or enhancing these services and resources.</p>	C	Field visits confirmed management for diverse services and values.
<p><b>5.6. The rate of harvest of forest products shall not exceed levels which can be permanently sustained.</b></p>		
<p><b>5.6.a</b> In FMUs where products are being harvested, the landowner or manager calculates the sustained yield harvest level for each sustained yield planning unit, and provides clear rationale for determining the size and layout of the planning unit. The sustained yield harvest level calculation is documented in the Management Plan.</p>	C	<p>This FME is harvesting at a conservative rate as confirmed through review of AAC calculations and harvest data from the past 5 years.</p> <p>This FME’s harvest level is determined as part of the unit management plan process. The sustained yield calculation is based on inventory data that include:</p>

<p>The sustained yield harvest level calculation for each planning unit is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• documented growth rates for particular sites, and/or acreage of forest types, age-classes and species distributions;</li> <li>• mortality and decay and other factors that affect net growth;</li> <li>• areas reserved from harvest or subject to harvest restrictions to meet other management goals;</li> <li>• silvicultural practices that will be employed on the FMU;</li> <li>• management objectives and desired future conditions.</li> </ul> <p>The calculation is made by considering the effects of repeated prescribed harvests on the product/species and its ecosystem, as well as planned management treatments and projections of subsequent regrowth beyond single rotation and multiple re-entries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As confirmed on p. 251 in The Strategic Plan for SF Management (2010) and Estimating Periodic Annual Increment on SF Lands in New York (2010) and through interviews itemized elsewhere in this report, calculations were based on documented growth rates for acreages of each forest type/age class and species distribution.</li> <li>• As confirmed on p. 252 in The Strategic Plan for SF Management (2010) and interviews itemized elsewhere in this report, calculations include mortality and decay.</li> <li>• As confirmed on p. 251 in The Strategic Plan for SF Management (2010) and Estimating Periodic Annual Increment on SF Lands in New York (2010) and through interviews itemized elsewhere in this report, all forest acres were used to complete this growth and sustained yield harvest calculation.</li> <li>• Annual harvest levels are based on silvicultural practices on areas subject to harvests as described in each unit management plan.</li> <li>• Annual harvest levels accurately but conservatively reflect the management objectives and desired future conditions as described by each unit management plan. For example, the draft Hemlock-Candice Unit Management Plan includes text and a table describing Management Objectives and Actions (pp 55-60 and the desired future condition (pp 64-71)).</li> </ul> <p>The harvest level is conservative as confirmed through review of AAC calculations and harvest data from the past 10 years and p. 252 in The Strategic Plan for SF Management (2010). Current harvests average around 43 million bf per year.</p> <p>Management units are defined by each region, and harvest schedules are planned for these units based on conditions in each stand and appropriate silviculture and desired future conditions. These plans do not set a sustained harvest level per se. As public lands, there is a history of harvesting less than the annual increment of growth to meet other management objectives. Periodically, DEC analyzes inventory data and confirms that harvest is well below annual growth.</p>
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<p><b>5.6.b</b> Average annual harvest levels, over rolling periods of no more than 10 years, do not exceed the calculated sustained yield harvest level.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>This FME is harvesting at a conservative rate as confirmed through review of AAC calculations and harvest data from the past 10 years and p. 252 in The Strategic Plan for State Forest Management (2010). Current harvests yield 17,485 Mbf plus 27,000 cords (~ 31 million bf/per year).</p> <p>DEC has contracted analysis of Periodic Annual Increment (PAI) to researchers at SUNY-ESF, the first in 2010 and a follow-up in 2015. In both studies, the finding was that DEC is cutting considerably less than what is being grown. Current estimate is 25-30% of growth. See <i>Updating of Periodic Annual Increment on State Forest Lands in New York</i>, September, 2015. Auditors were presented with actual harvest data for the past year, confirming that harvesting has been conservative with regard to a sustained yield harvest level.</p>
<p><b>5.6.c</b> Rates and methods of timber harvest lead to achieving desired conditions, and improve or maintain health and quality across the FMU. Overstocked stands and stands that have been depleted or rendered to be below productive potential due to natural events, past management, or lack of management, are returned to desired stocking levels and composition at the earliest practicable time as justified in management objectives.</p>	<p>C (Obs)</p>	<p>This FME’s desired future condition includes the creation and maintenance of a variety of age and size classes within healthy high-quality stands. Desired stocking levels and composition were observed throughout the audit excluding some salvage sales for emerald ash borer. See site notes.</p> <p>This FME’s desired future condition includes the creation and maintenance of a variety of age and size classes within healthy high-quality stands.</p> <p><b>See Observation 2018.4</b> for additional detail.</p>
<p><b>5.6.d</b> For NTFPs, calculation of quantitative sustained yield harvest levels is required only in cases where products are harvested in significant commercial operations or where traditional or customary use rights may be impacted by such harvests. In other situations, the forest owner or manager utilizes available information, and new information that can be reasonably gathered, to set harvesting levels that will not result in a depletion of the non-timber growing stocks or other adverse effects to the forest ecosystem.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>There are no NTFP claims being made.</p> <p>Additionally, there is no significant harvest of NTFPs, although there are a few leases for the tapping of maple trees for syrup production. Harvest levels are set by specifying the numbers of taps based on conservative regional guidelines. Hay is sold from a small number of non-forested tracts.</p>
<p><b>Principle #6: Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.</b></p>		

<p><b>6.1. Assessments of environmental impacts shall be completed -- appropriate to the scale, intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources -- and adequately integrated into management systems. Assessments shall include landscape level considerations as well as the impacts of on-site processing facilities. Environmental impacts shall be assessed prior to commencement of site-disturbing operations.</b></p>	<p>NE</p>	
<p><b>6.2 Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas). Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. Inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping, and collecting shall be controlled.</b></p>		
<p><b>6.2.a</b> If there is a likely presence of RTE species as identified in Indicator 6.1.a then either a field survey to verify the species' presence or absence is conducted prior to site-disturbing management activities, or management occurs with the assumption that potential RTE species are present.</p> <p>Surveys are conducted by biologists with the appropriate expertise in the species of interest and with appropriate qualifications to conduct the surveys. If a species is determined to be present, its location should be reported to the manager of the appropriate database.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Natural Heritage Surveys have been completed in all regions. It is routine for foresters to consult the GIS database of RTE species when planning a harvest. A second database, Predicted Richness Overlay (PRO) has been developed by the Natural Heritage Program to predict sites that may include rare species and communities. Evidence that both sources of information are being used was found on all three <i>Stand Diagnosis and Prescription</i> forms examined during the audit and in repeated questioning of foresters in the field.</p> <p>During the 2018 audit the RTE system was checked by comparing the Natural Heritage database against completed work done by foresters. Interviews with foresters demonstrated knowledge of existing procedures and accurately reported known issues.</p>
<p><b>6.2.b</b> When RTE species are present or assumed to be present, modifications in management are made in order to maintain, restore or enhance the extent, quality and viability of the species and their habitats. <b>Conservation zones</b> and/or <b>protected areas</b> are established for RTE species, including those S3 species that are considered rare, where they are necessary to maintain or improve the short and long-term viability of the species. Conservation measures are based on relevant science, guidelines and/or consultation with relevant, independent experts as necessary to achieve the conservation goal of the Indicator.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>In Regions 5, 6, and 7 during the 2018 audit several examples were presented and discussed where measures were taken in planning and implementation of harvest to protect unique habitats and rare species. See site notes. Personnel from the Natural Heritage Program and Bureau of Wildlife are available for consultation on appropriate conservation measures to protect RTE species and communities. Interviews with both Natural Heritage and forestry staff during the 2018 audit each reported instances where such consultations were done. See site notes.</p>
<p><b>6.2.c</b> For medium and large public forests (e.g. state forests), forest management plans and operations are designed to meet species' recovery goals, as well as</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>The <i>Strategic Plan</i> contains landscape-level biodiversity plans. Some of them feature the recovery of rare species. Efforts to protect habitat for wildlife</p>

<p>landscape level biodiversity conservation goals.</p>		<p>species were examined during the audit, see Site Notes. BFRM and Bureau of Wildlife work closely on many fronts, so it should be expected that recovery efforts would be coordinated.</p>
<p><b>6.2.d</b> Within the capacity of the forest owner or manager, hunting, fishing, trapping, collecting and other activities are controlled to avoid the risk of impacts to vulnerable species and communities (See Criterion 1.5).</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>DEC's Conservation Officers are well equipped to enforce the many state and federal regulations pertinent to this indicator. Gated roads are maintained to restrict vehicle access in many places. Collecting materials from state forests is regulated through Part 190 of the Environmental Conservation Law and the Temporary Revocable Permitting process.</p>
<p><b>6.3. Ecological functions and values shall be maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including: a) Forest regeneration and succession. b) Genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity. c) Natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.</b></p>		
<p><b>6.3.a.</b> Landscape-scale indicators</p>		
<p><b>6.3.a.1</b> The forest owner or manager maintains, enhances, and/or restores under-represented <i>successional</i> stages in the FMU that would naturally occur on the types of sites found on the FMU. Where old growth of different community types that would naturally occur on the forest are under-represented in the landscape relative to natural conditions, a portion of the forest is managed to enhance and/or restore old growth characteristics.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Ecoregional Landscape Assessments, in the <i>Strategic Plan</i>, present summaries of landscape assessments for seven ecoregions in the state. Land cover and age-class distributions were examined. UMPs build on the <i>Strategic Plan</i> and provide details of current and planned distributions of forest types and age classes. The Six Nations UMP confirms this.</p>
<p><b>6.3.a.2</b> When a <i>rare ecological community</i> is present, modifications are made in both the management plan and its implementation in order to maintain, restore or enhance the viability of the community. Based on the vulnerability of the existing community, <i>conservation zones</i> and/or <i>protected areas</i> are established where warranted.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Rare communities are part of the Natural Heritage database. NY DEC policies require them to be treated in the same manner as rare species during harvest planning and management. Examples were shown in the head office GIS and also in the field at the Salmon River Unique Area, see Site Notes.</p>
<p><b>6.3.a.3</b> When they are present, management maintains the area, structure, composition, and processes of all <i>Type 1</i> and <i>Type 2 old growth</i>. Type 1 and 2 old growth are also protected and buffered as necessary with conservation zones, unless an alternative plan is developed that provides greater overall protection of old growth values.</p> <p>Type 1 Old Growth is protected from harvesting and road construction. Type 1 old growth is also protected from other timber management activities, except as needed to maintain the ecological values associated with the stand, including old growth attributes (e.g., remove exotic species, conduct controlled burning, and thinning from below in dry forest types when and where restoration is appropriate).</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Old-growth stands are found almost exclusively within the Forest Preserve system which is owned and managed by this FME but is not part of this FME's certified land base. As part of the Forest Preserve system, these old growth stands are protected from harvesting and other timber management activities. Where other old-growth stands are found, they are classified as HCVF and protected from harvest.</p>

<p>Type 2 Old Growth is protected from harvesting to the extent necessary to maintain the area, structures, and functions of the stand. Timber harvest in Type 2 old growth must maintain old growth structures, functions, and components including individual trees that function as refugia (see Indicator 6.3.g).</p> <p>On public lands, old growth is protected from harvesting, as well as from other timber management activities, except if needed to maintain the values associated with the stand (e.g., remove exotic species, conduct controlled burning, and thinning from below in forest types when and where restoration is appropriate).</p> <p>On American Indian lands, timber harvest may be permitted in Type 1 and Type 2 old growth in recognition of their sovereignty and unique ownership. Timber harvest is permitted in situations where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Old growth forests comprise a significant portion of the tribal ownership.</li> <li>2. A history of forest stewardship by the tribe exists.</li> <li>3. High Conservation Value Forest attributes are maintained.</li> <li>4. Old-growth structures are maintained.</li> <li>5. Conservation zones representative of old growth stands are established.</li> <li>6. Landscape level considerations are addressed.</li> <li>7. Rare species are protected.</li> </ol>		
<p><b>6.3.b</b> To the extent feasible within the size of the ownership, particularly on larger ownerships (generally tens of thousands or more acres), management maintains, enhances, or restores habitat conditions suitable for well-distributed populations of animal species that are characteristic of forest ecosystems within the landscape.</p>	C	<p>Habitat for wildlife is a major objective for BFRM, as confirmed by examining both the Strategic Plan and various UMPs. Wildlife biologists from the Division of Fish &amp; Wildlife are often housed with BFRM personnel and participate in UMP development. The “young forest initiative” of the Division of Fish &amp; Wildlife has increased such cooperation and is contributing to addressing the overall lack of early-successional habitat on the landscape. One example discussed during audit was habitat for New England cottontails, a Threatened species.</p>
<p><b>6.3.c</b> Management maintains, enhances and/or restores the plant and wildlife habitat of <b>Riparian Management Zones (RMZs)</b> to provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) habitat for aquatic species that breed in surrounding uplands;</li> <li>b) habitat for predominantly terrestrial species that breed in adjacent <b>aquatic habitats</b>;</li> </ol>	C	<p>RMZs are addressed in DEC’s <i>Guidelines for Special Management Zones</i>. Guidelines are clear, but there is an often-used exemption for intrusions into buffer zones in cases where existing or former trails or roads still exist. Approval of such exemptions is required at the regional level, addressed within forest stand prescriptions and further authorized approval required by Regional or Supervising Foresters. One such</p>

<p>c) habitat for species that use riparian areas for feeding, cover, and travel;</p> <p>d) habitat for plant species associated with riparian areas; and,</p> <p>e) stream shading and inputs of wood and leaf litter into the adjacent aquatic ecosystem.</p>		<p>example was observed and discussed during the field audit, a sale in Oswego 8 (Salmon River State Forest). See <i>DEC Division of Lands and Forests Management Rules for Establishment of Special Management Zones on State Forests</i> (SMZ Rules).</p>
<p><b>Stand-scale Indicators</b></p> <p><b>6.3.d</b> Management practices maintain or enhance plant species composition, distribution and frequency of occurrence similar to those that would naturally occur on the site.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Management plans and harvest prescriptions address plant species composition. Site conditions are routinely used to determine appropriate species. This FME’s clear-cut policy and plantation policy provide direction toward natural species distributions. As existing plantations mature and are converted to a mix of native species</p> <p>UMPs and the <i>Strategic Plan</i> emphasize the importance of using an analysis of site conditions to determine management goals and objectives for forest types. Field visits confirmed efforts to promote natural regeneration.</p>
<p><b>6.3.e</b> When planting is required, a local source of known provenance is used when available and when the local source is equivalent in terms of quality, price and productivity. The use of non-local sources shall be justified, such as in situations where other management objectives (e.g. disease resistance or adapting to climate change) are best served by non-local sources. <b>Native species</b> suited to the site are normally selected for regeneration.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Planting is not widely used for regeneration. The state nursery provides planting materials that are from local sources when supplemental planting is the preferred option. Some use of Norway spruce (<i>Picea abies</i>) continues and has been documented to be non-invasive in this region.</p> <p>Most regeneration is natural, but some planting is still done, using local stock from state. See Policy ONR-DLF-1 Plantation Management on State Forests: <a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/69658.html">http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/69658.html</a></p>
<p><b>6.3.f</b> Management maintains, enhances, or restores habitat components and associated stand structures, in abundance and distribution that could be expected from naturally occurring processes. These components include:</p> <p>a) large live trees, live trees with decay or declining health, <b>snags</b>, and well-distributed coarse down and dead woody material. <b>Legacy trees</b> where present are not harvested; and</p> <p>b) vertical and horizontal complexity.</p> <p>Trees selected for <b>retention</b> are generally representative of the dominant species found on the site.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>The Strategic Plan For State Forest Management (2010) and this FME’s retention policy include guidelines for these habitat features. These guidelines have also been integrated into revisions of each unit management plan.</p> <p>Importance of these habitat elements has been clearly stated in both <i>Strategic Plan</i> and in most recent UMPs. Field foresters interviewed during the audit are aware of these habitat elements and take pride in demonstrating trees marked for retention to protect such habitat components. Examples were evident in most field sites visited. See Policy ONR-DLF-2 Retention on State Forests: <a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/69658.html">http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/69658.html</a></p>
<p><b>6.3.g.1</b> In the Southeast, Appalachia, Ozark-Ouachita, Mississippi Alluvial Valley, and Pacific Coast Regions, when <b>even-aged systems</b> are employed, and during salvage</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>More than half of the harvesting on state forests is even-aged and a number of examples were provided during site visits. See site notes. The FME has</p>

<p>harvests, live trees and other native vegetation are retained within the harvest unit as described in Appendix C for the applicable region.</p> <p>In the Lake States Northeast, Rocky Mountain and Southwest Regions, when even-aged silvicultural systems are employed, and during salvage harvests, live trees and other native vegetation are retained within the harvest unit in a proportion and configuration that is consistent with the characteristic natural disturbance regime unless retention at a lower level is necessary for the purposes of restoration or rehabilitation. See Appendix C for additional regional requirements and guidance.</p>		<p>addressed this topic in detail and developed two relevant policies: ONR-DLF-2, Retention on State Forests and ONR-DLF-3, Clearcutting on State Forests: <a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/policy_sfclearcutting.pdf">http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/policy_sfclearcutting.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>6.3.g.2</b> Under very limited situations, the landowner or manager has the option to develop a qualified plan to allow minor departure from the opening size limits described in Indicator 6.3.g.1. A qualified plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is developed by qualified experts in ecological and/or related fields (wildlife biology, hydrology, landscape ecology, forestry/silviculture).</li> <li>2. Is based on the totality of the <b>best available information</b> including peer-reviewed science regarding natural disturbance regimes for the FMU.</li> <li>3. Is spatially and temporally explicit and includes maps of proposed openings or areas.</li> <li>4. Demonstrates that the variations will result in equal or greater benefit to wildlife, water quality, and other values compared to the normal opening size limits, including for sensitive and rare species.</li> <li>5. Is reviewed by independent experts in wildlife biology, hydrology, and landscape ecology, to confirm the preceding findings.</li> </ol>	<p>C</p>	<p>Departures from opening sizes have not been requested.</p>
<p><b>6.3.h</b> The forest owner or manager assesses the risk of, prioritizes, and, as warranted, develops and implements a strategy to prevent or control <b>invasive species</b>, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. a method to determine the extent of invasive species and the degree of threat to native species and ecosystems;</li> <li>2. implementation of management practices that minimize the risk of invasive establishment, growth, and spread;</li> <li>3. eradication or control of established invasive populations when feasible: and,</li> <li>4. monitoring of control measures and management practices to assess their effectiveness in preventing or controlling invasive species.</li> </ol>	<p>C</p>	<p>Risks of invasive species are articulated in both the <i>Strategic Plan</i> and in recently-prepared UMPs. The extent of invasive species in state forests varies among regions, but all regions have programs to identify, treat, and monitor key species. Interviews with the Section Chief revealed that DEC has promoted the “Competing Vegetation Program” by supporting staff to maintain and gain their pesticide applicators license with the goal of conducting spot treatments for invasive species. Also, DEC has a newly formed Bureau of Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health which continues to monitor and control the establishment and spread of exotic and invasive species. An example during the 2018 audit included spot treatment by licensed forestry applicator roadside</p>

		near Salmon Falls Unique Area. Monitoring, in this case, is being done by staff forester.
<b>6.3.i</b> In applicable situations, the forest owner or manager identifies and applies site-specific fuels management practices, based on: (1) natural fire regimes, (2) risk of wildfire, (3) potential economic losses, (4) public safety, and (5) applicable laws and regulations.	C	Prescribed burning is used occasionally on state forests, most often to maintain openings for wildlife. A burn permit is required. Wildfires are not common, but when they do occur BFRM is equipped to participate in suppression.
<b>6.4. Representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape shall be protected in their natural state and recorded on maps, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations and the uniqueness of the affected resources.</b>	NE	
<b>6.5 Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to control erosion; minimize forest damage during harvesting, road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances; and to protect water resources.</b>	NE	
<b>6.6. Management systems shall promote the development and adoption of environmentally friendly non-chemical methods of pest management and strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides. World Health Organization Type 1A and 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides; pesticides that are persistent, toxic or whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use; as well as any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited. If chemicals are used, proper equipment and training shall be provided to minimize health and environmental risks.</b>	NE	
<b>6.7. Chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non-organic wastes including fuel and oil shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at off-site locations.</b>	NE	
<b>6.8. Use of biological control agents shall be documented, minimized, monitored, and strictly controlled in accordance with national laws and internationally accepted scientific protocols. Use of genetically modified organisms shall be prohibited.</b>	NE	
<b>6.9. The use of exotic species shall be carefully controlled and actively monitored to avoid adverse ecological impacts.</b>		
<b>6.9.a</b> The use of <i>exotic species</i> is contingent on the availability of credible scientific data indicating that any such species is non-invasive and its application does not pose a risk to native biodiversity.	C	Planting is not widely used for regeneration. The state nursery provides planting materials that are from local sources when supplemental planting is the preferred option. Norway spruce is planted in limited quantities. Managers have determined through experience and

		document review that this species is considered non-invasive in this landscape.
<b>6.9.b</b> If exotic species are used, their provenance and the location of their use are documented, and their ecological effects are actively monitored.	C	Planting stock is acquired from the state nursery, including provenance. Success of planting and any evidence of invasion are monitored during the inventory process.
<b>6.9.c</b> The forest owner or manager shall take timely action to curtail or significantly reduce any adverse impacts resulting from their use of exotic species	C	BFRM's Plantation Policy ( <i>Strategic Plan</i> ) is to move away from planting for regeneration, but Norway spruce has been successful on some sites where natural regeneration is not adequate for successful restocking. Several Norway spruce harvests with planned shift to native species were visiting during the 2017 audit. See site notes.
<b>6.10. Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion:</b> a) Entails a very limited portion of the forest management unit; and b) Does not occur on High Conservation Value Forest areas; and c) Will enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, long-term conservation benefits across the forest management unit.	NE	
<b>Principle #7: A management plan -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations -- shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long-term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.</b>		
<b>7.1. The management plan and supporting documents shall provide:</b> a. Management objectives. b) description of the forest resources to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands. b. Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories. d) Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection. e) Provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics. f) Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments. g) Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species. b) h) Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership. i) Description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.	NE	
<b>7.2 The management plan shall be periodically revised to incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific</b>	NE	

<p><b>and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.</b></p>		
<p><b>7.3 Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plans.</b></p>		
<p><b>7.3.a</b> Workers are qualified to properly implement the management plan; All forest workers are provided with sufficient guidance and supervision to adequately implement their respective components of the plan.</p>	C	<p>Foresters hold professional degrees and have been provided with a variety of guidance documents and further trained for example in HCVF protection, BMPs, Rutting Guidelines and a variety of publications in relation to silvicultural prescriptions as confirmed through interviews and document review. During the 2017 audits forestry staff in separate regions (for example Region 8, 9 and 4) had available copies of applicable policies.</p>
<p><b>7.4 While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the primary elements of the management plan, including those listed in Criterion 7.1.</b></p>		
<p><b>7.4.a</b> While respecting landowner confidentiality, the management plan or a management plan summary that outlines the elements of the plan described in Criterion 7.1 is available to the public either at no charge or a nominal fee.</p>	C	<p>The Strategic Plan for SF Management (2010) and unit management plans are available free of charge on the FME’s website and in either paper or electronic form at regional offices and at public meetings.</p>
<p><b>7.4.b</b> Managers of public forests make draft management plans, revisions and supporting documentation easily accessible for public review and comment prior to their implementation. Managers address public comments and modify the plans to ensure compliance with this Standard.</p>	C	<p>The Strategic Plan for SF Management (2010), draft management plans, revisions and supporting documentation are available free of charge on the FME’s website and in either paper or electronic form at regional offices and at public meetings. Public comments and plan modifications are noted within The Strategic Plan for SF Management (2010) on p. 340-353. Additionally, such modifications were included in the UMPs examined during the audit.</p>
<p><b>Principle #8: Monitoring shall be conducted -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management -- to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.</b>  <i>Applicability Note: On small and medium-sized forests (see Glossary), an informal, qualitative assessment may be appropriate. Formal, quantitative monitoring is required on large forests and/or intensively managed forests.</i></p>		
<p><b>8.1 The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be determined by the scale and intensity of forest management operations, as well as, the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment. Monitoring procedures should be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.</b></p>		
<p><b>8.1.a</b> Consistent with the scale and intensity of management, the forest owner or manager develops and</p>	C	<p>The <i>State Forest Inventory Database</i> (SFID) is based on a series of systematic, replicable protocols. A detailed</p>

<p>consistently implements a regular, comprehensive, and replicable written monitoring protocol.</p>		<p>handbook assures that inventory monitoring is conducted consistently across state forests. Aerial photo surveys are scheduled on 4-5-year intervals and forest health surveys are conducted annually or as needed.</p> <p>Re-inventory is done on basis with UMP and threshold on age of data. Agreement with Natural Heritage to do HCVF monitoring which is done on a 5-year rotational cycle such that some monitoring activities are conducted annually. The overall program is overseen by Natural Heritage and prioritized to ensure conservation attributes are monitored appropriately.</p>
<p><b>8.2. Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor, at a minimum, the following indicators: a) yield of all forest products harvested, b) growth rates, regeneration, and condition of the forest, c) composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna, d) environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations, and e) cost, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.</b></p>		
<p><b>8.2.a.1</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.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>As confirmed through review of the SFID database and interviews itemized elsewhere in this report, this FME's inventory includes items a-f. During the 2017 audit SFID was reviewed and noted that many of the stands reviewed were outdated. The program re-inventories harvested sites and seeks to re-inventory 10% of stands per Unit/Region. The 2018 summary reports about 5% of commercial forest types are newer than 15 years old. Of the current UMPs reviewed, 100% of the plans have inventory done within 8 years.</p>
<p><b>8.2.a.2</b> Significant, unanticipated removal or loss or increased vulnerability of forest resources is monitored and recorded. Recorded information shall include date and location of occurrence, description of disturbance, extent and severity of loss, and may be both quantitative and qualitative.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Special monitoring has been undertaken in recent years to assess levels of damage from wind storms and floods. Likewise, monitoring in being carried out for several exotic insect pests and diseases. Intensive monitoring is being done for Emerald Ash Borer with pre-salvage and salvage harvests resulting, see site notes.</p>
<p><b>8.2.b</b> The forest owner or manager maintains records of harvested timber and NTFPs (volume and product and/or grade). Records must adequately ensure that the requirements under Criterion 5.6 are met.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>BFRM maintains records of harvest volume, product, species and acreage. Summary reports are generated each quarter and were inspected during the audit.</p>
<p><b>8.2.c</b> The forest owner or manager periodically obtains data needed to monitor presence on the FMU of: 1) Rare, threatened and endangered species and/or their <i>habitats</i>;</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Data associated with RTEs is primarily completed by Natural Heritage Program staff with assistance from foresters and are supplemented by Natural Heritage Program's existing data. This data provides one</p>

<p>2) Common and rare plant communities and/or habitat;                  3) Location, presence and abundance of invasive species;                  4) Condition of protected areas, set-asides and buffer zones;                  5) High Conservation Value Forests (see Criterion 9.4).</p>		<p>method to identify historic locations of RTE species. Secondly, workshops have been designed and implemented to train forest management staff to supplement these inventories with the aid of predictive species overlays. Evidence that these methods of data acquisition have been implemented include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For example, RTE lists are contained in Appendix B of each Unit Management Plan.</li> <li>2. For example, common and rare plant communities are described in included in The Strategic Plan for SF Management (2010) p. 45-78 and in UMPs examined during the 2017 audit.</li> <li>3. Invasive species are itemized in the Strategic Plan for SF Management (2010) p. 275-288.</li> <li>4. Resource maps that include HCVF delineations have been distributed to each region and observed in regions 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 during the 2017 audit.</li> <li>5. Foresters and NHP maintain a list of sites and visit sites classified as HCVF to monitor changes.</li> </ol> <p>Data associated with RTEs is primarily gathered by Natural Heritage Program staff with assistance from foresters who have received training in recent workshops. A list of trainings and descriptions were provided and reviewed. Interviews with foresters confirmed trainings are being conducted and management adjustments are being made in response to these trainings. The Bureau of Wildlife conducts assessments of vertebrate species, with emphasis on RTE and game species, these surveys are recorded and tracked. Rare plant communities are monitored by NHP; forest types by BSFM.</p> <p>Invasive species are monitored, as needed, on a regional basis, mostly as a product of the extensive field work done by foresters.</p>
<p><b>8.2.d.1</b> Monitoring is conducted to ensure that site specific plans and operations are properly implemented, environmental impacts of site disturbing operations are minimized, and that harvest prescriptions and guidelines are effective.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Foresters normally visit harvesting sites 1-2 times/week to monitor compliance with harvest plans and conditions of the Notice of Sale. However, see closure of <b>Minor CAR 2017.4</b> for additional detail regarding monitoring.</p>
<p><b>8.2.d.2</b> A monitoring program is in place to assess the condition and environmental impacts of the forest-road system.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>The Operations Division of DEC maintains most roads on state forests and keeps records in a GIS data layer. UMPs provide an accounting of roads, needs for improvements, and plans for additional roads. Many roads in State Forests are town or county roads.</p>

<p><b>8.2.d.3</b> The landowner or manager monitors relevant socio-economic issues (see Indicator 4.4.a), including the social impacts of harvesting, participation in local economic opportunities (see Indicator 4.1.g), the creation and/or maintenance of quality job opportunities (see Indicator 4.1.b), and local purchasing opportunities (see Indicator 4.1.e).</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>This FME completed studies related to socio-economic values of forests including the Department published the Statewide Forest Resources Assessment &amp; Strategy (2010) and “New York State Industrial Timber Harvest Production and Consumption Report-2011”.</p> <p>BFRM periodically contracts for studies of socio-economic impacts and has utilization and marketing specialists on staff. As a public agency, numerous branches of government monitor some elements of this indicator. During the 2018 audit, DEC staff were interviewed confirming aspects of these indicators.</p>
<p><b>8.2.d.4</b> Stakeholder responses to management activities are monitored and recorded as necessary.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>BFRM conducts formal outreach to stakeholders as UMPs and <i>Strategic Plans</i> are prepared and revised. They also do so when new policies, e.g., extraction for natural gas, are developed and debated. Stakeholders are invited to visit regional offices, phone, or send email messages.</p>
<p><b>8.2.d.5</b> Where sites of cultural significance exist, the opportunity to jointly monitor sites of cultural significance is offered to tribal representatives (see Principle 3).</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Sites of tribal significance are not known to occur on state forests (interview with David Witt), although tribal representatives are regularly invited to comment on management plans and their revisions.</p>
<p><b>8.2.e</b> The forest owner or manager monitors the costs and revenues of management in order to assess productivity and efficiency.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>As confirmed through the review of quarterly reports and the annual total harvest .xls spreadsheet and individual contracts itemized elsewhere in this report, this FME maintains records including for example harvest volume, product, species and acreage. The cost of management is monitored as described during interviews with Rob Messenger. The information that has been collected is sufficient and has been used to assess productivity and efficiency of harvest projects.</p> <p>According to this data, a large number of small (local sale) projects are administered in some regions by this FME; based on the FMEs analysis, these small local sale projects are not as efficient or productive as larger projects due to the high level of administrative overhead. These smaller sales yield a much lower value per unit of volume. While the completion of some small sale projects is desirable for a variety of reasons including but not limited to conformance with indicator 5.2.c, an increase in the proportion of longer-term (usually larger) contracts and the resulting decrease in the proportion of short-term (usually smaller) contracts in some regions may be a desired approach for this FME during these challenging economic times. Interviews conducted during this audit confirm that this FME has submitted a proposal</p>

		<p>to the state legislature that will increase the current small/local Timber sale contract cap to \$50,000 from \$10,000. If approved, this change will mean that the comptroller's office will no longer need to approve timber harvest contracts that are less than \$50,000. This approval process will require a change to state law for revenue sales but will significantly enhance and speed up the process for timber sale contract approval.</p> <p>As a public agency, costs and revenues are carefully monitored. Summary statistics are found on the DEC web pages.</p>
<p><b>8.3 Documentation shall be provided by the forest manager to enable monitoring and certifying organizations to trace each forest product from its origin, a process known as the "chain of custody."</b></p>		
<p><b>8.3.a</b> When forest products are being sold as FSC-certified, the forest owner or manager has a system that prevents mixing of FSC-certified and non-certified forest products prior to the point of sale, with accompanying documentation to enable the tracing of the harvested material from each harvested product from its origin to the point of sale.</p>	C	<p>This FME sells forest products on the stump. Timber sale contracts include for example location of harvest and FM/COC code and maps of the harvested stand(s). There is no risk of mixing certified and non-certified products prior to the point of sale. All land where products are harvested is certified; none are excised from the certified land base.</p>
<p><b>8.3.b</b> The forest owner or manager maintains documentation to enable the tracing of the harvested material from each harvested product from its origin to the point of sale.</p>	C	<p>This FME sells forest products on the stump. Timber sale contract copies are maintained as confirmed through examination of every timber sale examined during the 2017 audit. Each contract includes for example location of harvest and the FM/COC code and maps of the harvested stand(s).</p>
<p><b>8.4 The results of monitoring shall be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the management plan.</b></p>		
<p><b>8.4.a</b> The forest owner or manager monitors and documents the degree to which the objectives stated in the management plan are being fulfilled, as well as significant deviations from the plan.</p>	C	<p>Each unit management plan includes a table of scheduled management actions (Appendix F). Each revised unit management plan includes a text description of current and future management. Regional managers maintain records of unit management plan goals, objectives and targets and completed activities.</p>
<p><b>8.4.b</b> Where monitoring indicates that management objectives and guidelines, including those necessary for conformance with this Standard, are not being met or if changing conditions indicate that a change in management strategy is necessary, the management plan, operational plans, and/or other plan implementation measures are revised to ensure the objectives and guidelines will be</p>	C	<p>The Forest Certification Coordinator maintains data including for example details related to conformance to the certification standard. Regular staff meetings address requirements of certification as confirmed during interviews with staff.</p>

<p>met. If monitoring shows that the management objectives and guidelines themselves are not sufficient to ensure conformance with this Standard, then the objectives and guidelines are modified.</p>		
<p><b>8.5 While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring indicators, including those listed in Criterion 8.2.</b></p>		
<p><b>8.5.a</b> While protecting landowner confidentiality, either full monitoring results or an up-to-date summary of the most recent monitoring information is maintained, covering the Indicators listed in Criterion 8.2, and is available to the public, free or at a nominal price, upon request.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>This FME’s web page includes a “State Forests Accomplishment Report,” which includes an annual summary of inventory, maintenance, and treatments. This summary includes some of the indicators listed in 8.2. In addition, the web-site states “...For more information about inventory, maintenance and treatments on State Forest please call the Bureau of Forest Resource Management at (518) 402-9428...” Other monitoring details are included in unit management plan revisions and in the Strategic Plan for State Forest Management (2010).</p>
<p><b>Principle #9: Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.</b></p> <p><b>High Conservation Value Forests are those that possess one or more of the following attributes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a) Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant: concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g., endemism, endangered species, refugia); and/or large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance</b></li> <li><b>b) Forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems</b></li> <li><b>c) Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g., watershed protection, erosion control)</b></li> <li><b>d) Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g., subsistence, health) and/or critical to local communities’ traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of forest areas that <i>may have</i> high conservation value attributes include, but are not limited to:</b></p> <p>Central Hardwoods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old growth – (see Glossary) (a)</li> <li>• Old forests/mixed age stands that include trees &gt;160 years old (a)</li> <li>• Municipal watersheds –headwaters, reservoirs (c)</li> <li>• Rare, Threatened, and Endangered (RTE) ecosystems, as defined by GAP analysis, Natural Heritage Inventory, and/or the World Wildlife Fund’s Forest Communities of Highest Conservation Concern, and/or Great Lakes Assessment (b)</li> <li>• Intact forest blocks in an agriculturally dominated landscape (refugia) (a)</li> <li>• Intact forests &gt;1000 ac (valuable to interior forest species) (a)</li> <li>• Protected caves (a, b, or d)</li> <li>• Savannas (a, b, c, or d)</li> <li>• Glades (a, b, or d)</li> <li>• Barrens (a, b, or d)</li> </ul>		

- Prairie remnants (a, b, or d)

North Woods/Lake States:

- Old growth – (see Glossary) (a)
- Old forests/mixed age stands that include trees >120 years old (a)
- Blocks of contiguous forest, > 500 ac, which host RTEs (b)
- Oak savannas (b)
- Hemlock-dominated forests (b)
- Pine stands of natural origin (b)
- Contiguous blocks, >500 ac, of late successional species, that are managed to create old growth (a)
- Fens, particularly calcareous fens (c)
- Other non-forest communities, e.g., barrens, prairies, distinctive geological land forms, vernal pools (b or c)
- Other sites as defined by GAP analysis, Natural Heritage Inventory, and/or the World Wildlife Fund’s Forest Communities of Highest Conservation Concern (b)

*Note: In the Lake States-Central Hardwoods region, old growth (see Glossary) is both rare and invariably an HCVF.*

*In the Lake States-Central Hardwoods region, cutting timber is not permitted in old-growth stands or forests.*

*Note: Old forests (see Glossary) may or may not be designated HCVFs. They are managed to maintain or recruit: (1) the existing abundance of old trees and (2) the landscape- and stand-level structures of old-growth forests, consistent with the composition and structures produced by natural processes.*

*Old forests that either have or are developing old-growth attributes, but which have been previously harvested, may be designated HCVFs and may be harvested under special plans that account for the ecological attributes that make it an HCVF.*

*Forest management maintains a mix of sub-climax and climax old-forest conditions in the landscape.*

<b>9.1 Assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests will be completed, appropriate to scale and intensity of forest management.</b>	NE	
<b>9.2 The consultative portion of the certification process must place emphasis on the identified conservation attributes, and options for the maintenance thereof.</b>	NE	
<b>9.3 The management plan shall include and implement specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the applicable conservation attributes consistent with the precautionary approach. These measures shall be specifically included in the publicly available management plan summary.</b>	NE	
<b>9.4 Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes.</b>	C	
<b>9.4.a</b> The forest owner or manager monitors, or participates in a program to annually monitor, the status of the specific HCV attributes, including the effectiveness of the measures employed for their maintenance or	C	Historically, HCVF monitoring had been done on a region by region basis. As of March 2017, the protocols being used are on a schedule to precede UMP development whereby assessments of the

<p>enhancement. The monitoring program is designed and implemented consistent with the requirements of Principle 8.</p>		<p>properties are being done to provide information about conservation needs for flora or fauna before the plan is prepared. These confirm existing and may designate new HCVF.</p> <p>Interviews with NY DEC staff and visual examination of GIS databases confirmed that that regular monitoring of HCV attributes occurs by the FME and other DEC bureaus. Results are documented and recorded in relevant GIS HCVF data layers. The GIS data layers and recent relational database records of monitoring were demonstrated for the audit team.</p> <p>Overall Natural Heritage program monitoring is detailed in the March 2017 document, <i>Monitoring High Conservation Value Forests</i>. The focus for these protocols are areas identified as having exceptional values, representing extant occurrences of state-rare communities and rare species. These HCVFs include occurrences of rare communities and species with state rarity ranks of S1, S1S2, and S2 documented from 1990 to the present. These represent the following HCVF land classifications: 1) Rare Community and 2) Special Treatment Areas respectively. The monitoring data gathered is specifically intended to support the attainment and reporting of biodiversity management and monitoring objectives identified in the FSC US FM standard.</p> <p>Details of management, protection, and monitoring were reviewed at several sites during the 2018 audit. HCVF visited during the 2018 audit included the Salmon Falls Unique Area (cultural/historic/indigenous); R7: Oswego 5, Stand A-3, TX108852; R5: Fulton County State Forest HCVF Watershed Project; and the R5: Rockwood State Forest, see Site Notes.</p>
<p><b>9.4.b</b> When monitoring results indicate increasing risk to a specific HCV attribute, the forest owner/manager re-evaluates the measures taken to maintain or enhance that attribute, and adjusts the management measures in an effort to reverse the trend.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>Management actions related to HCV attributes were reviewed. None were associated with increasing risk. Discussions with staff during the 2018 audit confirmed staff knowledge, awareness, and training to implement HCVF risk assessments both during UMP development and implementing management in the field.</p>
<p><b>Principle #10: Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1-9, and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world's needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.</b></p>		

Principle 10 is determined by the audit team to be not applicable to the evaluation of the FME as the type of silviculture practiced on the state forestlands, and the forest conditions that result from these practices, do not meet the FSC definition of “plantation forest management.”

<b>APPENDICES</b>		
<b>APPENDIX C: REGIONAL LIMITS AND OTHER GUIDELINES ON OPENING SIZES</b>		
This Appendix contains regional Indicators and guidance pertinent to maximum opening sizes and other guidelines for determining size openings and retention. These Indicators are requirements based on FSC-US regional delineations		
<b>Indicator 6.3.g.1</b>		
<b>NORTHEAST REGION:</b>		
<b>6.3.g.1.a</b> Silvicultural systems favor natural regeneration where appropriate, and forest operations are planned to protect pre-established natural regeneration of desirable species.	<b>C</b>	See site notes. All sites inspected were naturally regenerated. There are written policies, procedures and forest management plans (strategic and unit FMPs) that specify use of natural regeneration.

### Appendix 6 – Chain of Custody Indicators for FMEs Conformance Table

Chain of Custody indicators were not evaluated during this evaluation.

### Appendix 7 – Trademark Standard Conformance Table

Trademark Standard was not evaluated during this evaluation.