

REPORT Forest Certification



BC Timber Sales Kamloops Business Area SFI Certification Audit for 100 Mile House TSA– February 2009

In February 2009, an audit team from KPMG Performance Registrar Inc. (KPMG PRI) carried out a SFI certification audit of the BC Timber Sales Kamloops Business Area woodlands operations in the 100 Mile House Timber Supply Area (TSA) in central British Columbia against the requirements of the 2005 - 2009 edition of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) standard. This Certification Summary Report provides an overview of the process and KPMG's findings.

Background

The implementation of an SFI® system assures the public that the Company is conducting forest management under a globally recognized standard for sustainable forestry approved through the PEFC Standards framework. The SFI standard consists of 13 broad forest management and wood procurement objectives, each of which has a number of indicators that must be met in order to achieve verification requirements.

Kamloops BA's Crown Land Forest Operations:

BC Timber Sales (BCTS) is an autonomous organization within the Ministry of Forest and Range, with financial and operational independence from regional and district operations. This organization is comprised of 12 business areas across the province and supports the Ministry's goal of providing British Columbians with sustainable benefits from the commercial use of public forests. BC Timber Sales provides these benefits by planning, developing, and selling through auction a substantial and representative portion of the province's annual available timber volume. The bid prices received from auctioned timber drive the Market Pricing System for setting stumpage in coastal and interior operating areas of the province. The organization manages about 20% (16 million m³) of the provincial allowable annual cut (AAC).

The Kamloops Business Area (BA), situated in southcentral British Columbia (B.C.), encompasses the Kamloops, 100 Mile House, Cascades and Headwaters Forest Districts. Within these Forest Districts, the Kamloops BA operates in the Kamloops, Merritt and 100 Mile House TSAs. It's operations in the Kamloops and Merritt TSAs have been certified to the CSA Z809 sustainable forest management standard. The objective of this audit was to assess Kamloops BA's operations in the 100 Mile House TSA against the SFI 2005-2009 standard.

Six statutes form the legal framework for forest management on Crown lands in B.C.: the Forest Act, the Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act, the Ministry of Forests Act, the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA), the Wildfire Act, and the Foresters Act. Numerous other provincial and federal acts, regulations, guidelines and policies also have implications for forestry operations on Crown lands. BCTS offices issue timber sale licences to successful bidders under the authority of the Forest



BCTS
BC Timber Sales
Kamloops



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Act. The AAC of each TSA is determined by the provincial chief forester, every 5 years, under authority of Section 8 of the Forest Act. The AAC allocated to Kamloops BA in the TSA is 456,071 m³.

FRPA and its regulations in particular set the requirements for planning, road building, logging, reforestation, and grazing. FRPA prescribes levels of protection for forest values including watersheds and wildlife habitat, and defines planning processes. BC Timber Sales has developed Forest Stewardship Plans (FSP) to meet the requirements of FRPA.

The Kamloops BA has developed a Sustainable Forest Management Plan (SFMP) which describes how the operation will achieve the broad objectives of higher level plans, such as the Cariboo Chilcotin Land Use Plan (CCLUP), developed through various public involvement processes. It also guides the development and content of other planning documents including the FSP. The SFMP reflects the bounds established by higher level plans and through the regulatory framework described above. Kamloops BA ensures that all lower-level plans it is responsible for developing (e.g.: the FSP, and all site level plans) are consistent with the commitments made in their SFMP.

Kamloops BA crown land woodlands operations are managed from the timber sales office in Kamloops, B.C. with field teams located in offices in Kamloops, Merritt, Clearwater and 100 Mile House.



SFI Objectives Sampled by the 2009 Certification Audit of BC Timber Sales Kamloops Business Area 100 Mile House TSA operations:

- **Objective 1** – To broaden the implementation of sustainable forestry by ensuring long-term harvest levels based on the use of the best scientific information available
- **Objective 2** – To ensure long-term forest productivity and conservation of forest resources through prompt reforestation, soil conservation, afforestation, and other measures.
- **Objective 3** – To protect water quality in streams, lakes, and other water bodies
- **Objective 4** – To manage the quality and distribution of wildlife habitats and contribute to the conservation of biological diversity by developing and implementing stand-and landscape-level measures that promote habitat diversity and the conservation of forest plants and animals, including aquatic fauna.
- **Objective 5** – To manage the visual impact of harvesting and other forest operations.
- **Objective 6** – To manage Program Participant lands that are ecologically, geologically, historically, or culturally important in a manner that recognizes their special qualities.
- **Objective 7** – To promote the efficient use of forest resources
- **Objective 8** – N/A
- **Objective 9** – To improve forestry research, science, and technology, upon which sound forest management decisions are based

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Audit Objectives

The following audit objectives were included within the scope of the audit:

- An SFI certification audit to evaluate the operation’s conformance with the requirements of the 2005-2009 version of the SFI standard. Certification audits are designed to assess performance against all of the elements of the SFI standard.

Audit Scope

The audit was conducted against the requirements of the 2005-2009 edition of the SFI standard, and incorporated an assessment against the SFI program objectives for:

- Land management;
- Forestry research, science and technology;
- Training and education;
- Legal and regulatory compliance;
- Public and landowner involvement in the practice of sustainable forestry; and,
- Management review and continual improvement.

The scope of the 2009 SFI certification audit of the Kamloops BA’s operations included all of the woodlands operations noted above. Fibre procurement activities were not included in the scope of the certification as BC Timber Sales functions solely as a provider of Crown timber to other wood suppliers.

The Audit Process

- *Audit Team* – This certification audit was conducted by Sylvi Holmsen, RPF, CEA(SFM), EMS(LA) and Dennis Lozinsky, RPF. All team members are KPMG PRI auditors and have conducted numerous forest management audits under a variety of standards including SFI, ISO 14001, and CSA Z809.
- *SFI Certification Audit/ISO 14001 Re-registration Audit* – This SFI certification audit was completed during two site visits and involved on-site assessments of all elements of the Kamloops BA’s SFI program in conjunction with KPMG PRI’s re-registration audit of the ISO 14001 system, which has been registered to the ISO 14001:2004 standard since early 2006. The audit included visits to a number of field sites to evaluate the extent to which the operation’s forest management plans and practices conform to the requirements of the SFI standard.
- *Surveillance Audits* – Annual surveillance audits are conducted by the audit team to ensure that SFI requirements continue to be met.
- *SFI Program Representative* – Richard Cooper, FP, RFT served as Kamloops BA’s SFI program representative during the audit.
- The assessment involved site visits as follows:
 - Forestry program planning was assessed in Kamloops at the Timber Sales Office and in 100 Mile House at the field team,

SFI Objectives Sampled by the 2009 Certification Audit of BC Timber Sales Kamloops Business Area 100 Mile House TSA operations:

- **Objective 9** – To improve forestry research, science, and technology, upon which sound forest management decisions are based
- **Objective 10** – To improve the practice of sustainable forest management by resource professionals, logging professionals and contractors through appropriate training and education programs
- **Objective 12** – To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry by encouraging the public and forestry community to participate in the commitment to sustainable forestry and publicly report progress

Audit results

Minor non-conformities from previous audits that remain open	0
New major non-conformities	0
New minor non-conformities	0
New opportunities for improvement	8

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- Forestry program implementation and monitoring was assessed in the 100 Mile House Field Team.

Use of Substitute Indicators

The audit was based on the indicators included in the 2005-2009 version of the SFI standard. No substitute indicators were used during the 2009 certification audit.

Audit Conclusions

Based on the findings of our full scope certification audit of the Company's operations, the Company's land management activities meet the requirements of the 2005-2009 version of the SFI standard in all material respects.

Performance against the SFI objectives covered by the scope of our certification audit was strong. As a result, BC Timber Sales Kamloops Business Area 100 Mile House was recommended for certification under the SFI standard.

No non-conformances were observed.

The audit found that:

- The operation's B.C. woodlands operations meet the requirements of the 2005-2009 version of the SFI standard in all material respects. As a result, a decision has been made to grant certification to the SFI standard for the next 5 years. Kamloops BA's SFI certification is valid until March 12, 2014.
- The operation's EMS continues to be effectively implemented, and all elements of the EMS meet the requirements of ISO 14001:2004 in all material respects.

Good Practices

During the course of the audit, a number of good practices were identified. The following list outlines some of the more notable examples of good practices that were observed by the audit team:

- BCTS has built on the strengths of its existing EMS to deliver its SFI commitments.
- In relation to Objective 2 (long-term forest productivity), the field samples during the ISO re-registration audit and the SFI implementation assessment and review of planning activities indicated a clear focus on salvaging mountain pine beetle infested stands and good efforts to retain other species where significant amounts exist (e.g. selective removal of pine from Douglas-fir dominated stands).
- In relation to Objective 2 (reforestation), BCTS selects site specific regeneration strategies that are ecologically suited to the sites.
- In relation to Objective 12 (sustainability), BCTS has made significant efforts to engage First Nations through a variety of means including referrals of proposed blocks and roads, direct contact and the development of agreements to facilitate the referral process and the collection of traditional use and cultural heritage data in proposed harvest areas.



The audit included field inspections of active harvesting operations and interviews with equipment operators.

Types of audit findings

Major nonconformities:

Are pervasive or critical to the achievement of the SFM Objectives.

Major non-conformities must be addressed immediately or registration cannot be achieved / maintained.

Minor nonconformities:

Are isolated incidents that are non-critical to the achievement of SFM Objectives.

All non-conformities (major and minor) require an action plan within 30 days and must be addressed by the operation.

Opportunities for improvement:

Are not non-conformities but are comments on specific areas of the SFM System where improvements can be made.

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- In relation to Objective 12 (sustainability), BCTS staff are active in participating in the delivery of forestry-related training, field trips, and presentations to local public groups including schools.

Follow-up on Findings from Previous Audits

The 2009 audit found that the Kamloops BA continues to make adequate progress towards addressing the findings of previous ISO 14001 audits.

Areas of Nonconformance

Full conformance was found in relation to all of the indicators included in the Kamloops BA SFI audit protocol. No minor non-conformities were identified during the combined SFI certification/ISO 14001 re-registration audits of the Kamloops BA's crown land forest operations in the 100 Mile House TSA.

Opportunities for Improvement

A number of opportunities for improvement were identified during the audit:

- Objective 2 includes a requirement for the organization to protect advance regeneration during harvesting activities. The audit identified an opportunity to better document processes for protecting natural regeneration during harvesting in the site plans and TSL documents.
- The audit identified an opportunity to improve BCTS LPCs crews' awareness of the existence of the SFI program and BCTS' objectives related to SFM certification as required by Objective 10.
- The audit identified an opportunity for BCTS Kamloops Business Area to provide clearer links between the SFMP and other documents supporting the SFI commitment to compliance with social laws in Objective 11.
- The audit identified opportunities for BCTS Kamloops Business Area to improve the tracking of research and public education and outreach activities to ensure that all relevant projects are identified and documented to better demonstrate conformance with Objectives 9 and 12.
- The audit identified an opportunity to improve BCTS' to more clearly define shutdown requirements related to weather conditions as required by Objective 3.
- The audit identified an opportunity to better describe processes for the identification, management and conservation of previously unidentified ecological and geological sites in accordance with Objective 6.

Corrective Action Plans

No corrective action plans were required. However, the next surveillance audit will include a follow-up assessment of the identified weaknesses to confirm that the SFM system continues to meet the SFI performance measures and is effectively implemented.



Multiple uses, such as livestock grazing, recreation, guiding and forestry, coexist within the business area.



Photo courtesy of George Bruckner

The Kamloops Business Area includes a wide geographical and topographical range with a number of significant lakes and rivers that provide a variety of wildlife habitats.

Contacts:

Chris Ridley-Thomas, RPBio, CEA (604) 691-3088
David Bebb, RPF, CEA (604) 691-3451

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