

REPORT Forest Certification



BC Timber Sales Okanagan-Columbia Business Area SFI Periodic Assessment – October 2009

In October 2009, an audit team from KPMG Performance Registrar Inc. (KPMG PRI) carried out an SFI periodic assessment of the BC Timber Sales Okanagan-Columbia Business Area (Okanagan-Columbia BA) woodlands operations conducted in the Columbia Forest District against the requirements of the 2005 - 2009 edition of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) standard. A CSA Z809:2002 surveillance audit was conducted at the same time. This Certification Summary Report provides an overview of the process and the SFI findings.



Description of Okanagan-Columbia's Crown Land Forest Operations:

British Columbia (BC) Timber Sales 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 Okanagan-Columbia BA, situated in south central BC, encompasses the Okanagan Shuswap and Columbia Forest Districts. The scope of the audit covered Okanagan-Columbia BA's sustainable forest management planning and practices within the Columbia Forest District, which encompasses its operations in the Revelstoke Timber Supply Area (TSA), Golden TSA, Tree Farm Licence (TFL) 23, TFL 55 and TFL 56. The BA's sustainable forest management planning and practices within the Okanagan Shuswap Forest District was covered under a separate CSA Z809 certification audit, and as such is not reflected in this report.

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. BC Timber Sales offices issue timber sale licences to successful bidders under the authority of the Forest 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 Okanagan-Columbia BA in the two TSAs and three TFLs in the Columbia Forest District is 215,700 m³.



BCTS
BC Timber Sales
Okanagan-Columbia

Findings – BC Timber Sales Okanagan-Columbia SFI Periodic Assessment – October 2009

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 Okanagan-Columbia 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 Revelstoke and Kootenay-Boundary Land Use Plans, developed through 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. The Okanagan-Columbia BA ensures that all lower-level plans it is responsible for developing (i.e., its FSP and all site level plans) are consistent with the commitments made in their SFMP.

Okanagan-Columbia BA crown land woodlands operations are managed from the timber sales office in Vernon, B.C. with one field team also located in an office in Revelstoke.

Audit Objectives

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

- An SFI periodic assessment to evaluate the operation’s conformance with selected requirements of the 2005-2009 version of the SFI standard (Okanagan-Columbia BA’s operations within the Columbia Forest District).
- Verification that the requirements of ISO 14001:2004 (Okanagan-Columbia operations over the entire Business Area) as they support the SFI system were being maintained.

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:

- Forest Productivity and Conservation of Forest Resources (SFI objective 2);
- Wildlife Habitat and Conservation of Biological Diversity (SFI objective 4);
- Legal and regulatory compliance (SFI objective 11);
- Management review and continual improvement (SFI objective 13).

The scope of the 2009 SFI periodic assessment of the Okanagan-Columbia Business Area operations within the Columbia Forest District included all of the SFI objectives 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

- *Audit Team* – The Revelstoke-based SFI periodic assessment of the Business Area operations in the Columbia Forest District was conducted by Michael Alexander, RPF, CEA(SFM), EMS(LA).

Audit results

Major nonconformities	0
Minor nonconformities	0
Opportunities for improvement	1

Types of audit findings

Major nonconformities:

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

Major nonconformities 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 nonconformities (major and minor) require an action plan within 30 days and must be addressed by the operation.

Opportunities for improvement:

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

Findings – BC Timber Sales Okanagan-Columbia SFI Periodic Assessment – October 2009

- *Surveillance Audits* – This is the second periodic assessment for the Okanagan-Columbia Business Area Revelstoke operations. The first periodic assessment was conducted in February 2009, at which time assessment of silviculture activities was not possible due to snow coverage. To allow assessment of operations in snow free conditions a second periodic assessment was scheduled for fall 2009.
- *ISO 14001 System Verification* – While the ISO 14001:2004 registration for BCTS Okanagan-Columbia was not explicitly in scope for this assessment the environmental management system does support the SFI system. Therefore during the course of the October 2009 SFI periodic assessment applicable elements of the Okanagan-Columbia EMS, as they support the SFI system, were tested during the course of the audit.
- *SFI Program Representatives* – Darcie Annesley RFT and Warren Yablonski RPF served as Okanagan-Columbia Business Area SFI program representatives during the assessment.

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 periodic assessment.

Audit Conclusions

The audit found that:

- The operation's Revelstoke woodlands operations continue to meet the requirements of the 2005-2009 version of the SFI standard in all material respects. The audit did not identify any non-conformities. As a result, a decision has been made to recommend that the Okanagan-Columbia Business Area continue to be registered to SFI standard.

Good Practices

During the course of the audit, the following good practices were identified:

- Excellent work has been to protect scenic values and to maintain the recreational mountain bike trail through A56123 (K1Y5) while conducting harvesting operations designed to control a fir bark beetle infestation on a highly visible location near Revelstoke.
- Completion of the "Plants and Ecosystems at Risk in the BCTS Okanagan Columbia Business Area." database. This database is used by Planning Foresters to identify Red & Blue Listed plants and plant communities.

Follow-up on Open Nonconformities from Previous Assessments

At the time of this assessment there was one minor non-conformity from the February 2009 periodic assessment. The Okanagan-Columbia Business Area had previously provided KPMG PRI corrective action plans for addressing this non-conformity and the audit team were able to verify that the corrective actions had been implemented. This non-conformity is now closed.

Findings – BC Timber Sales Okanagan-Columbia SFI Periodic Assessment – October 2009

Areas of Nonconformity

The October 2009 periodic assessment did not identify non-conformities with respect to the SFI 2005-2009 standard.

Opportunities for Improvement

The following opportunity for improvement was identified during the SFI periodic assessment:

- Objective 13 - the July 2009 EMS Committee did review EMS related issues however the minutes do not record if there was any discussion regarding SFI system performance nor does it address the status of the corrective action from the February 2009 periodic assessment.

Corrective Action Plans

As the October 2009 periodic assessment did not raise any findings of non-conformance BCTS Okanagan-Columbia were not required to develop corrective actions.