



## **St. Louis County**

### **SFI 2005-2009**

#### **Audit Coverage**

- During the period July 9-12, 2007, QMI conducted the annual surveillance audit of the St. Louis County SFI system to the SFI 2005-2009 standard. The audit took 4 audit-days on-site to complete.
- The Audit Team consisted of Mr. Jack Ward CF, EMS(LA) as Team Leader; and Mr. Rick Larkin CF, EMS(LA).
- To verify compliance to Minnesota Voluntary Site Level guidelines and conformance to St. Louis County operational planning requirements, the Audit Team assessed 21 field sites across the county. This entailed interviewing St. Louis County staff, timber sale purchasers, and contractors; as well as observing the results of harvesting, road maintenance and construction, and silviculture activities.
- All SFI 2005-2009 Objectives and Performance Measures were assessed and a portion of the indicators were assessed in accordance with the following scope:

#### **Scope of Registration:**

The environmental management system as the foundation for achieving Sustainable Forestry Initiative 2005-2009 principles and performance measures in all forestry management activities including planning, harvest, forest renewal and land management.

#### **Background**

- The St. Louis County operations have been registered to the SFI standard since 2004. This SFIS is supported by an ISO 14001 Environmental Management System also registered in 2004.
- The St. Louis County SFIS and EMS systems have undergone annual third party surveillance audits by QMI since the date of initial registration.
- The St. Louis County Land Department's central office is located in Duluth, MN and the County's EMS/SFI Manager is Mr. Mark Reed.



## Positive Aspects

The Audit Team observed the following positive management practices:

St. Louis County is investigating the potential of fuel wood chipping to thin red pine plantations. The thinning would occur when the trees are not of sufficient size to be merchantable using traditional thinning methods. Thinning the stands at the earlier age should result in improved tree growth earlier in the life of the stand, increased volume production and improved forest health.

## Key Areas of Non-conformance

No non-conformances to the SFI standard were identified.

## Key Opportunities for Improvement

- Objective 3, PM 3.2- Consider clarifying a consistent policy for the expectation and communication of harvesting adjacent to open water and non-open water (non-forested) wetlands
- Objective 4, PM 4.1, Indicator 7- Consider training for field personnel on the identification of invasive exotic species.

St. Louis County is recommended for continued registration to the SFI 2005-2009 Standard.

QMI's Forestry Group registers forest companies to ISO 14001, SFI 2005-2009, and CSA Z809 SFM standards. The QMI Forestry Group consists of professional foresters and industry experts located in our Cleveland, Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal offices. Contact [marketingservices@qmi.com](mailto:marketingservices@qmi.com) for more information.

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## SFIS 2005-2009 Periodic Assessments

### Non-conformances

Major Non-conformance: A systemic failure of the Program Participant's SFI system to meet an SFI objective, performance measure or indicator.

Minor Non-conformance: An isolated lapse in SFI system implementation which does not indicate a systemic failure to consistently meet an SFI objective, performance measure or indicator.

All non-conformances require an action plan within 30 days and must be addressed by the operation or registration cannot be achieved / maintained.

### Opportunities for Improvement

Are isolated observations that are non-critical to the achievement / maintenance of EMS/SFIS objectives.

### Positive Aspects

Are features of the EMS/SFIS system that are considered as enhancements to the expected level of EMS/SFIS performance.