



St. Louis County
SFI 2010-2014
September 27-30, 2010

Audit Coverage

- During the period September 27-30, 2010, QMI conducted a 48 Month Surveillance Audit of St. Louis County's SFI forestry program to the SFI 2010-2014 standard. The audit took 4 audit-days to complete.
- The audit team consisted of Mr. Jack Ward CF, EMS (LA) as Team Leader and Ms. Lynn Penniman, EMS (LA) auditor.
- To verify compliance to Minnesota Voluntary Guidelines and conformance to St. Louis County environmental management system policies and procedures, the Audit Team assessed 23 field sites across the Pike Lake Zone. This entailed interviewing St. Louis County staff, timber sale purchasers and contractors. Forest practices audited included, CC & CT harvests, site preparation (chemical and mechanical), planting, road construction and stream enhancement projects.
- All SFI 2010-2014 Principles, Performance Measures, and selected Objectives, Performance Measures and Indicators were assessed in accordance with the following scope:

Scope of Registration: The registration covers the environmental management system as the foundation for achieving Sustainable Forestry Initiative 2010-2014 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 practices:

- The use of GPS in Feller/Bunchers matched with St Louis County Shape files is an innovative approach to identify sensitive area boundaries
- Contractor Pre-Work E-Training.
- New Best Management Standards for Field Operations (Cab Cards) that include information on Work Instructions, Environmental Policy, Spills and MN Invasive Species.

Areas of Minor Non-conformance

No non-conformances were raised

Opportunities for Improvement

- Objective 2.1, Indicators 2/3: Consider detailed analysis of stand origin dates and assessment of all Aspen natural regeneration for all units harvested since 2004.
- Objective 3.2, Indicator 4: Consider placing emphasis on evaluation of skid road placement in relation to filter strips.

Audit Recommendation

The results of forty-eight (48) Month Surveillance Audit indicate that the SFIS of St. Louis County forestry operations remains suitable and effectively implemented and meets the requirements of the SFI 2010-2014 Standard relative to the scope of registration identified in this report; therefore, a recommendation for continued registration has been submitted to QMI-SAI Global's review team.

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 for more information.

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SFIS 2005-2009 Periodic Assessments

Non-conformances.....	0
Opportunities for Improvement	2
Positive Aspects.....	3

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. Major non-conformances 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 SFIS objectives.

Positive Aspects

Areas that are deemed to be of best practices