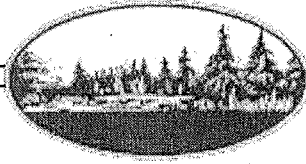


MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Maine Forest Products Council

Certified Mills Processing Report

Presented to the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee

Maine Forest Products Council
16 Winthrop Street
Augusta, ME 04330
www.maineforest.org

Maine's Woods Are Working

Introduction

Since 1994, Maine's Sustainable Forestry Initiative® program has been promoting good management of Maine's forestland. At the heart of the SFI Program is a set of principles initiated by the American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA). These principles call upon SFI participants to meet market demands while using environmentally responsible practices that promote the protection of wildlife, plants, soil, air and water quality to ensure the future of our nation's forests. The SFI principles are translated into action by providing forest managers with a specific roadmap to expand the practice of sustainable forestry and to improve performance visibly. The following objectives form the substance of the program and promote:

- * Broadening the practice of sustainable forestry.
- * Ensuring prompt reforestation.
- * Protecting water quality.
- * Enhancing wildlife habitat.
- * Minimizing the visual impact of harvesting.
- * Protecting special sites.
- * Contributing to biodiversity.
- * Continuing improvements in wood utilization.
- * Continuing the prudent use of forest chemicals to help ensure forest health.

The Role of the State Implementation Committee

Currently including 20 members statewide, the SFI is coordinated in Maine by a State Implementation Committee (SIC). The SIC has been meeting since 1995 and includes about 60 people who represent AF&PA members, non-members, wood brokers, sawmills, Tree Farmers, small woodlot owners, loggers and state agencies serving in advisory capacities.

Since its inception, the SIC has provided a forum in which landowners could discuss the challenges involved in changing forest practices to meet the SFI standard. It has developed training programs which provide continuing education for loggers, foresters, and other forest industry employees. And, in 1999, it created the Verification Oversight Panel, a committee of forest specialists that reviews SFI audits.

Monitoring Wood Procurement

Commitment to sustainable forest practices through wood procurement practices is a unique attribute of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, and in response to a request by the Chairs of the ACF Committee for an annual report on the wood processed in Maine by certified mills, or mills participating in a certification

MFPC Certified Mills Processing Report

program, the SIC is pleased to present the following report. This report follows in the footsteps of other reports which have been developed in the name of keeping Maine's policymakers apprised of developments in the SFI program, including the Annual Reports which have been produced as a result of the 1998 *JOINT RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE*.

The estimates in this report are based on the best available information regarding the percentage of wood processed at these mills which originates from land that is certified as being sustainably managed. Also included is a qualitative description of ongoing efforts by these mills to reduce the amount of wood coming from liquidation harvests. Finally, the report process will also include consideration of the limitations of the data and the development of methods designed to improve the information collected without being burdensome on our members.

Percentage Estimates

In developing the estimates of the percentage of wood which originates from land that is certified as being managed sustainably, the following guidelines and processes were used. First, each of the wood manufacturing facilities belonging to the SIC were asked to provide information on the percent of wood purchased from certified land in Maine. For some mills which purchase large quantities of wood from other large SFI or FSC certified landowners, this percentage is more easily obtained and generally a higher rate. For mills which purchase a larger percentage of wood from small landowners, there is a smaller pool of certified wood and a corresponding lower percentage rate.

In addition to reporting on the percentage of wood taken from certified lands, each mill was asked to supply information on the total amount of wood consumed, as reported to the Maine Forest Service (MFS) in the confidential Wood Processor Report. Based on the samples we received, the following data is presented. The results were tabulated in the table below and the 2003 data was compared to 2002 total volumes reported in the MFS 2002 Processor Report.

a. Discussion of the results (TABLE A, Page 3)

For purposes of this study, the best available comparison information comes from the 2002 Maine Forest Service Wood Processors Report. In reviewing the survey results, two main conclusions seem apparent. First, by our estimates, nearly all the pulpwood processed in Maine passes through SFI mills, indicating a strong commitment to sustainable forestry. Second, it is also clear that there is a direct correlation between the percentage of certified wood processed by Maine mills and the total percentage of Maine forest acreage which has been certified as being sustainably managed.

MFPC Certified Mills Processing Report

TABLE A			
ESTIMATE OF MAINE MILL CONSUMPTION OF MAINE WOOD CERTIFIED TO BE SUSTAINABLY MANAGED			
Product	2002 Maine Wood Consumed by Maine Mills (Cords) ²	Estimated 2003 Maine Wood Consumed by Maine SIC Mills	Estimated 2003 Percent from Maine Certified Land ³
SAWLOGS ¹	1,848,000	41%	32%
PULPWOOD	2,628,324	95%	35%
TOTAL	4,476,324		
FOOTNOTES: 1.) 1 mbf = 2 cords 2.) source: 2002 MFS Wood Processors Report 3.) Qualifying Certification systems = SFI, FSC & Tree Farm			

A Qualitative Description of ongoing efforts by mills to reduce the amount of wood coming from liquidation harvests.

When considering the role played by mills to reduce the amount of wood coming from liquidation harvests, it is important to remember that there is still no clear definition for what constitutes a liquidation harvest. Indeed, even after considerable study, the Maine Forest Service has been unable to determine precisely what percentage of the harvesting operations conducted annually in Maine should be considered liquidation harvests.

At the same time, however, given their role in enhancing and promoting the tenets of the SFI, the steadfast commitment of SIC members to the goals of sustainable forestry can hardly be questioned. Indeed, to maintain their certification, SFI mills are called upon by Objective 8 of the SFI Standards to “broaden the practice of sustainable forestry by cooperating with forest landowners, wood producers, consulting foresters and Program Participants’ employees who have responsibility in wood procurement and landowner assistance programs.”

Objective 8 requires participants to “work closely with state logging or forestry associations, or appropriate agencies and others in the forestry community, to foster improvement in the professionalism of wood producers. . . . Program Participants shall encourage landowners to utilize the services of qualified resource professionals and qualified logging professionals in applying principles of sustainable forest management on their lands.”

MFPC Certified Mills Processing Report

In other words, SFI mills are bound by the standards by which they are certified to promote and encourage sustainable forestry at all times. When it comes to promoting sustainability on lands not owned by SIC members, however, there are limits to how much change SFI should be expected to produce. After all, SFI is primarily a land certification system, and while participating mills take significant steps to ensure the purchase of sustainably managed wood, they are limited in their capacity to guarantee absolutely that all of their wood purchased comes from sustainably managed forests. That said, however, approaches have been developed which address the issues substantively, effectively, and with an eye toward building future success. In keeping with these goals, guidelines have been developed regarding wood procurement from non-SIC lands which:

1. Respect the rights of landowners;
2. Promote sustainable practices through education and outreach;
3. Focus on changing behavior;
4. Require landowner and logger compliance with laws and regulations, and;
5. Recognition of precarious balance between restriction of trade litigation and claims of industry collusion against wood suppliers.

On the other hand, these responsibilities do not involve imposing silvicultural requirements on non-SIC land, and they do not and can not determine long-term management objectives for independent landowners.

While SIC members must strike a delicate balance between vigilance and private rights when it comes to wood procurement from non-certified lands, their own lands are subject to the rigorous requirements of SFI Objectives 1-11, while their mills must follow Objectives 8-11. As stated before, certified mill procurement systems focus specifically on SFI objective 8, with an emphasis on Outreach, Education, and the Monitoring or progress. . At all times, the program focus is on changing behavior through reinforcement of best management practices rather than on enforcement. At times, mills have severed relationships with uncooperative suppliers, but such moves ultimately reduce the ability of certified mills to influence the behavior of non-certified practitioners.t

Maine's SIC: Ongoing Training and Education

In addition to monitoring wood procurement practices, Maine's SFI Program has also focused on the other end of the wood supply chain. By helping to establish criteria for logger-training programs in order to further the professionalism of loggers and to help build a foundation for a comprehensive approach to sustainable timber harvesting. In Maine, over 4000 loggers have undergone training for these standards thus far.

Criteria include:

- * Awareness of AF&PA Sustainable Forestry Principles;
- * Best Management Practices including road construction and retirement, site preparation, and stream-side management;
- * Regeneration, forest resource conservation, and aesthetics;

MFPC Certified Mills Processing Report

- * Awareness of responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act and other measures to protect and enhance wildlife habitat;
- * Logging safety;
- * OSHA and wage and hour rules;
- * Transportation;
- * Business management; and
- * Public policy and outreach.

Outcomes

Improved Environmental Performance:

Given the range of topics covered in the SFI workshops, the clear result on the ground has been a significant improvement in the environmental performance of many of Maine's loggers. These improvements have been repeatedly measured and are reported upon each year in the Maine Forest Service's Annual Report for Best Management Practices.

Increased level of logger training in safety and sustainable logger training:

More generally, the workshops have also resulted in dramatic improvements in logger safety and sustainable logging practices throughout the Maine woods. In the effort to improve the level of overall logger professionalism and safety training SFI has partnered with the Certified Logging Professional Program (CLP) from the earliest days of SFI. A statewide logger training program dating back nearly 15 years, it is the mission of the Certified Logging Professional Program to provide the best possible training and education for people involved in the Maine logging industry with a program of continual professional growth. Since its creation in 1990, CLP has trained over 3,900 loggers, and training sessions are offered throughout the state during each year.

SFI mills also encourage the professional development of loggers and monitor the number of CLP trained loggers supplying their mills, seeking constant improvement.

Maine SFI: Specialty Workshops

In addition to baseline training efforts, and as a supplement to the CLP and QLP training programs, several dozen specifically focused workshops have been conducted statewide in recent years for over 1000 loggers, landowners and foresters. Topics have included:

Water Quality: Maine's SFI sub-committee on Education has developed two levels of training that will help protect water quality.

- * Level One BMP is an introduction to harvesting techniques called Best Management Practices (BMPs). This one-day seminar is intended to provide a foundation of understanding of the premise behind BMPs.

MFPC Certified Mills Processing Report

* Level Two BMP leaves off where Level One ended by introducing the participants to the planning aspect of a harvest in terms of how and where to apply BMPs. In both workshops, participants are required to participate in hands-on exercises in the field using these techniques.

Aesthetics: Given the role that aesthetics plays in the minds of the public when they assess the quality of a harvest operation, the Education Committee has also developed a workshop on harvesting aesthetics. The workshop is focused on:

- techniques to enhance the presentation of areas directly in or around the harvest that have the greatest exposure to the public;
- a hands-on approach in the field that allows participants to evaluate and critique effectiveness of demonstrated techniques and visual concepts.

Forestry Hotline

In addition to the array of training programs designed to put Maine loggers on a track of constant improvement and ever increasing professionalism, Maine SFI also offers a toll-free number, 1-888-SFI-GOAL (734-4625), to give the public an easy way to voice questions about on-the-ground forestry practices in Maine. The state SFI Coordinator handles these confidential calls, investigating the caller's concern and consulting with the company in question, then providing feedback to the caller on the results. The primary purpose of the hotline is to give the public a direct line to those professionals who can intervene in possible poor practices at the earliest possible opportunity, and to educate concerned citizens about sustainable forestry practices throughout the state. Participating mills also work with both the loggers and the landowners to ensure the use of best management practices, observance of all laws, and consideration of the next generation through the prompt establishment of regenerating stock.

The SFI GOAL line is also used to guide the SIC as it determines what areas of sustainable forestry practices need to be more fully explained in future SFI workshops. Moreover, the Maine Forest Service also uses this line as a way to test the industry's vigilance, as well as to bring areas of special concern to the SIC's attention. Discussions are also ongoing between MFS and the SIC surrounding the possibility of joint training sessions this coming Spring.

Since its creation in 1997, the SFI GOAL number has received more than 180 calls from citizens throughout the state.

With its myriad approaches to the promotion of sustainable forest practices in Maine, Maine SFI has demonstrated its clear commitment to ensuring that Maine's forests are kept both productive for the present and sustained for future generations. By working to promote the sustainable management of forestland across the state, Maine's SFI-certified mills are succeeding in raising awareness of sustainable forestry practices, which will continue to result in ever-better forest management and forest harvesting practices.

Appendix A

Current Maine SFI Members

Domtar Inc.
Georgia Pacific Corporation
Great Northern Paper
Hancock Lumber Co.
Hancock Timber Resource Group
Huber Resources Corporation
International Paper Co.
Irving Woodlands, LLC
J.M. Huber Corp. – Wood Products
Lincoln Pulp & Paper Co.
Louisiana-Pacific Corp.
Madison Paper Industries
Maine Bureau of Public Lands
MeadWestvaco Corp.
Nexfor Fraser Papers, LTD.
Plum Creek
Robbins Lumber Co.
SAPPI Fine Paper North America
Seven Islands Land Co.
Wagner Forest Management