

Summary Report for the 2015 MI DNR Forest Certification Audit

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The 2015 forest certification audit of the Atlanta, Gaylord, Traverse City, and Gladwin forest management units and the Lansing office during the week of September 28:

- A full recertification audit under both the SFI and FSC forest management standards.
- A recommendation by both the SFI and FSC auditors for continued certification of the state forest under both forest management standards.
- This is a milestone, marking a full decade (2005-2015) of certification under both standards, which is a testament to the continual dedication and professional manner in which DNR staff sustainably manage state forest resources.

Preliminary SFI findings concern:

- SFI OFI 2015.1: Producers having spill kits on site;
- SFI OFI 2015.2: Refining how we compile and report forestry-related research;
- SFI CAR 2015.1: An updated statement of commitment to the 2015-19 SFI Forest Management Standard; and
- SFI CAR 2015.2: New requirements for producer Sustainable Forestry Education (SFE) and documentation thereof.

Preliminary FSC findings concern:

- FSC OBS 2015.1: An updated social and economic study for the state forest;
- FSC CAR 2015.2: Implementation of management practices to minimize or prevent the spread of invasive species;
- FSC OBS 2015.3: Seek derogation or cease use of some chemicals of the new FSC list of Highly Hazardous Pesticides by June 2016;
- FSC CAR 2015.4: Producers having spill kits on site;
- FSC OBS 2015.5: Implementation of ERA and high conservation values planning;
- FSC CAR 2015.6: Management plans identifying equipment and techniques that are to be used to minimize adverse impacts from management activities;
- FSC OBS 2015.7: Updating summarized monitoring reports that are made available to the public.

The DNR is currently working with the auditors to clarify and refine these preliminary findings over the next month.

There are many areas where the auditors noted that DNR operations exceed the certification standards:

- Actions address forest pests such as emerald ash borer, beech bark disease and oak wilt;
- Incorporating research into biodiversity management – particularly related to Kirtland’s warbler, northern long eared bat, the ERA management planning process, and the eastern massasauga rattlesnake;
- Providing recreational opportunities for our publics;
- Providing educational opportunities on sustainable forest management to our publics through our web site, stewardship program, urban and community forestry, fire program, forest health and brochures and other pamphlets available in our field offices;
- Stakeholder engagement and involvement in management activities;
- The MiFI inventory system;
- Inter-divisional cooperation in management of forest resources; and
- Use of tribal liaisons for coordination with tribes.

The 2016 forest certification audit will take place in the west UP and focus on the Baraga, Crystal Falls and Gwinn FMUs. The audit will be held August 8-12, 2016.