



REPORT Forest Certification



Fort St John Pilot Project—2018 CSA Z809-16 Re-registration Audit Summary

From July 24-26, 2018, an audit team from KPMG Performance Registrar Inc. (KPMG PRI) carried out a re-registration audit of the Fort St. John Pilot Project (FSJPP) participants' operations against the requirements of the CSA Z809-16 sustainable forest management (SFM) standard. This Certification Summary Report provides an overview of the process and KPMG's findings.

Description of the Fort Saint John Pilot Project's Defined Forest Area

The FSJPP Defined Forest Area (DFA) encompasses the Fort St. John Timber Supply Area (TSA) in the Peace region of northeast BC. The DFA is approximately 4 million hectares in area, with an allowable annual harvest of over 2 million cubic metres per year.

Scope of Certification

The scope of FSJPP's CSA Z809 certification includes the sustainable forest management system (including related public involvement, planning, harvesting, road and silviculture activities) implemented by FSJPP participants in the FSJPP Defined Forest Area.

The FSJPP participants are made up of organizations that have forest management tenure on the DFA, which are Canadian Forest Products Ltd (Canfor), BC Timber Sales (BCTS), Cameron River Logging Ltd., Mackenzie Pulpmill Corp., Dunne-Za Ventures LP., and Louisiana-Pacific Canada Ltd. However, all forestry activity is carried out by BCTS and Canfor. While BCTS manages its activities on its own tenure, Canfor manages its tenure as well as those of the remaining participants by agreement. All of the participants have consented in writing to take part in the pilot project and are subject to the terms and conditions of the FSJPP Regulation.

The Fort St. John Pilot Project was implemented across the Fort St. John TSA in 2001 as a pilot for an improved regulatory framework for forest practices. The main components of the project include regulatory flexibility to facilitate adaptive approaches to forest management, landscape level planning through an SFM plan, ongoing public involvement through a Public Advisory Group (PAG) and the adoption and implementation of certification systems as surrogates for the existing administrative process. The Fort St. John Pilot Project CSA Z809-16 certification is valid until September 13, 2021.

Audit Scope

The audit was conducted against all elements of the CSA Z809-16 standard, including those related to:

- The public participation process;
- Development and maintenance of the SFM plan;
- Monitoring of SFM performance, and;
- Implementation of the various management system components (including operational controls, monitoring and inspections, internal audits, etc.) that are required under the CSA Z809 standard.



The Audit

- **Audit Team** – The audit was conducted by a three person audit team comprising Yurgen Menninga, RPF, EP(EMSLA) – Lead Auditor, Branden Beatty, RPBio, EP(EMSLA), and Dennis Lozinsky, RPF, EP(EMSLA). All members of the audit team have considerable experience conducting audits against the requirements of the ISO 14001 and CSA Z809 standards.
- **Document Review** – DFA-specific off-site document reviews were completed prior to the field audit in order to assess environmental management system (EMS) documentation, the SFM Plan and associated values, objectives, indicators and targets, documentation pertaining to the Public Advisory Group (PAG) process, and increase the efficiency of the field portion of the audit.
- **Field Audit** – The on-site field audit included interviews with a sample of staff/contractors as well as PAG members and external stakeholders, and examination of forest SFM system records, monitoring information and public involvement information. The audit team conducted field assessments of a number of field sites (18 roads, 16 harvesting blocks, 5 silviculture sites, and one camp) to assess the FSJPP Participants’ planning, harvesting, silviculture, camps and road construction, maintenance and deactivation practices. The 2018 audit took approximately 12 days to complete, 10 of which were on-site. The balance of audit time was spent preparing the audit plan, conducting off-site document reviews, completing various audit checklists and preparing the main and public summary audit reports.
- **FSJPP Certification Program Representatives** – Jennifer McCracken, RPF of Canfor and Andrew Cosens, RFT of BC Timber Sales served as the FSJPP participants’ representatives during the audit.

Audit Objectives

The objectives of the audit were to evaluate the sustainable forest management system of the FSJPP Participants to:

- Determine conformance with the requirements of CSA Z809-16 standard;
- Evaluate the ability of the system to ensure the FSJPP Participants meet applicable regulatory requirements;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the system in ensuring that FSJPP Participants meet the specified objectives, and;
- Where applicable, identify opportunities for improvement.

These objectives were met.

Good Practices

A number of good practices were identified during the course of the audit, including:

- In relation to CSA Z809 @ 5.1 (Public and Aboriginal Participation), Canfor and BCTS are involved in the government/First Nations Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment, and have deferred harvest and implemented interim measures while the process is ongoing. (All participants)
- In relation to CSA Z809 @ 7.4.2 (Training & Knowledge), one of the contractors visited had developed an internal Pre-Work form which summarizes Issues of Concern, allowing staff and visitors to the harvest operation to review key block related issues and operational requirements. They have also designed a convenient

Fort St John Pilot Project 2018 CSA Z809 Audit Findings

Open non-conformities from previous audits	1
New major non-conformities	0
New minor non-conformities	1
New opportunities for improvement	2

Types of audit findings

Major non-conformities:

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

Minor non-conformities:

Are isolated incidents that are non-critical to the achievement of SFM Objectives.

All non-conformities require the development of a corrective action plan within 30 days of the audit. Corrective action plans to address major non-conformities must be fully implemented by the operation within 3 months or certification cannot be achieved / maintained. Corrective action plans to address minor non-conformities must be fully implemented within 12 months.

Opportunities for Improvement:

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

metal sandwich-board sign with storage box for prework forms, sign in sheets, safety information and block specific documentation. (Canfor)

- Regarding CSA Z809 @ 7.4.2 (Training & Knowledge), one of the tree planting contractors visited during the audit was found to do a prompt safety and environmental briefing for site visitors, demonstrating a high level of care for these topics. (Canfor)
- Regarding CSA Z809 @ 7.4.6 (Operational Procedures and Control), BCTS Peace-Liard business area has developed a Best Management Practice (BMP) document for snow fill crossings, which includes design, installation and deactivation to ensure crossings are effective for providing access and maintaining natural drainage following road deactivation. The BMP also ensures staff and licensee-contractors have the tools to assess proper installation and removal. CSA Z809 @ 7.4.6 SFM criteria. (BCTS)

Follow-up on Findings from Previous Audits

At the time of this assessment there were a total of five open non-conformities from previous audits. The audit team reviewed the implementation of the action plans developed by the project participants to address these issues, and found that they had been effectively implemented in four out of five cases. One non-conformity from the 2018 audit, relating to weaknesses for BCTS in adequately implementing the corrective action procedures for incidents, remains open. Updated corrective action plans have been developed and will be follow up on at the next audit.

New Areas of Nonconformance

One new minor non-conformity was identified during the re-registration audit, as follows:

- **CSA Z809 7.5.1 monitoring and measurement:** Canfor procedures specify that within four weeks of harvest completion, all outstanding activities and the final inspection are to be completed. The audit noted several blocks where the four week requirement was substantially not met. (Canfor)

New Opportunities for Improvement

Two new opportunities for improvement were also identified during the audit, as follows:

- **CSA Z809 7.4.6 operational procedures and control:** The audit noted instances where the symbols used to show Cultural Heritage Areas on operational maps were not clear. (Canfor)
- **CSA Z809 7.4.6 operational procedures and control:** On one Timber Sale it was found that a deactivated road section was partly impeding the drainage along the ditch line. (BCTS)

Corrective Action Plans



This photo above is looking along a road that had been rehabilitated following harvest the previous season. Cutting across the middle of the photo is a depression with a small watercourse; as shown from the intact vegetation the snow-fill crossing minimized impact to the riparian area. The road was rehabilitated and obstructed with debris, as shown in the photo below, to reduce hunting pressure on moose, based on a commitment made to First Nations.



Corrective action plans designed to address the root cause(s) of the non-conformity identified during the audit have been developed by the FSJPP participants and reviewed and approved by KPMG PRI. The next audit will include a follow-up assessment of these issues to confirm that the corrective action plans developed to address them have been implemented as required.

Audit Conclusions

The audit found that the FSJPP SFM system:

- Was in full conformance with the requirements of the CSA Z809-16 standard included in the scope of the audit, except where noted otherwise in this report;
- Continues to be effectively implemented, and;
- Is sufficient to systematically meet the commitments included in the participants' environmental and SFM policy, provided that the system continues to be implemented and maintained as required.

As a result, a decision has been made to re-certify the Fort Saint John Pilot Project to the CSA Z809-16 standard.

Focus Areas for the Next Audit

The following issues/topics have been identified as focus areas for the next audit:

- Outcome of the Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment process.



The photo above is taken from a helicopter, showing a large 22,000 hectare forest fire area contrasting black against the unburnt green forest. The fire occurred a few months before the audit. Such large fires are consistent with the type of historical natural disturbance.

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