

Sustaining Minnesota's Forest Resources



Sustainable Forestry Initiative®
Minnesota State Implementation Committee
Annual Report
2023



Minnesota SFI Implementation Committee



324 W Superior St., Suite 903, Duluth, MN 55802, 218-722-5013, rhorton@minnesotaforests.com

Mission: Provide oversight and administration of the SFI program within the State of Minnesota.

Purpose: Perform outreach and educational activities that promote sustainable forestry, the SFI program, and SFI Standard compliance. Facilitate or manage at a state level the programs and alliances which support the growth of the SFI program, including:

- Establish criteria for forest industry professionals to be deemed SFI trained.
- Establish and maintain protocols for addressing inconsistent practices (Appendix I).
- Focus landowner outreach efforts on educational and technical assistance.
- Focus public outreach efforts on increasing SFI program recognition and support with the public, local opinion leaders and forestry professionals.
- Promote forestry research, science, and technology.
- Document progress through an annual report to SFI.
- Protect the integrity of the SFI program.

Certified Organizations

Beltrami County
Carlton County
Crow Wing County
Koochiching County
Louisiana Pacific Corporation
Minnesota DNR
Molpus Woodlands
West Fraser
Packaging Corporation of America
PotlatchDeltic
Sappi Cloquet
St. Louis County
The Conservation Fund
UPM Blandin

Program Supporters

American Bird Conservancy
Minnesota Forest Resources Partnership
Minnesota Forestry Association
Minnesota Logger Education Program
Project Learning Tree
Society of American Foresters
University of Minnesota

INCONSISTENT PRACTICES

Call 888-234-3702 or visit <https://mn.gov/frc/public-concerns-registration.html>

The MFRC Public Concerns Registration Process (PCRP) is a way for citizens to register concerns they have about specific timber harvesting and forest management practices they see in Minnesota. Its primary purpose is to investigate forest management activities that may result in a negative impact on forest resources. The PCRP is intended to

be educational in nature; it precludes becoming involved in contract disputes or issues such as trespass that would more appropriately be dealt with in civil courts.

No public concerns were registered in 2023. See [MFRC PCRP 2023](#) for the annual report.

A Message From The Chair

It was another busy year for the SIC. Much of the time was consumed by updating the 2015 edition of the Private Landowner Manual to reflect the 2022 SFI Standards. We added new sections on fire, forests with exceptional conservation values, carbon and climate change, as well as an introduction on Indigenous history in the state.

The SIC funded great research from Charlie Blinn and William P. Sauerer, MS Student from the University of Minnesota on "*Barriers and Opportunities for Timber Harvesting on Small Family Forests in Northern Minnesota*".

The Minnesota Logger Education Program moved to new offices when STPaper sold their Duluth mill to Sofidel, an Italian company intent on expanding their recycled tissue capacity in Minnesota. But with that Dave Nolle and Julie Gulseth continue to improve the MLEP program for our timber operators. We have

closed the loop between site level guideline monitoring results and logger training so that we continue to increase compliance.

The Minnesota SIC also partnered with the Wisconsin and Michigan SICs to perform the annual update to the Lake States Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (FECV) Assessment. Leveraging the neighboring SICs allowed us to reduce redundancy and improve consistency in complying with new objectives from the 2022 Standard.

With that I bid you adieu as I close the book on a long natural resources career. Carlton County's Mark Westphal will do a great job finishing my term as the SIC Chair.



-Dick Moore



Certified Forests in Minnesota



Forest certification is a voluntary third-party process that identifies and recognizes well-managed forest land. It takes into consideration the ecological, economic, and social components of forests and surrounding communities.

Through chain-of-custody certification, fiber from certified forestland can move through production streams, thus enabling the end product to receive a certified logo informing customers that the product came from a certified, well-managed forest and was manufactured responsibly.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) is the single largest voluntary third-party forest certification standard in the world. It is globally recognized as a standard for supporting sustainable forest management and responsible sourcing.

Minnesota has the second highest acreage of certified forests in the nation with 7,852,878 of its 15,787,373 acres of timberland enrolled in either the Sustainable Forestry Initiative or Forest Stewardship Council program (or both).

Forest certification recognizes the timber industry and landowners' commitment to sustainability, continuously improved forest management, and interdisciplinary coordination and communication as they seek to maintain a sustainable supply of forest products and services from healthy, diverse, and productive ecosystems. This commitment to improvement is evident in the adoption of the 2022 Standards. There are entirely new requirements on sustaining biodiversity and addressing climate change, as well as changes around indigenous relationships, logger education and wildfire communications.

SFI Implementation Committees work with local, forestry, and professional associations, universities, government agencies, landowner groups, conservation groups, and many others to promote SFI standards to broaden the practice of responsible forestry and achieve on-the-ground progress. CORE priorities for SFI Implementation Committees include:

- ✓ Logger training and education
- ✓ Responding to inconsistent practices inquiries
- ✓ Landowner outreach
- ✓ Increasing recognition of SFI
- ✓ Annual reporting
- ✓ Protecting SFI Integrity

Logger Education

Logger education in Minnesota is provided by the Minnesota Logger Education Program (<https://www.mlep.org/>) and conforms with the SFI Forest Management and Fiber Sourcing Standards. The SIC Training Subcommittee sets the training standard in the state. In 2023 the SIC approved modifying the requirements to better reflect the Standards.

Training sessions in 2023 were offered in-person and online. In total, 478 logging contractors, their employees, and natural resource managers completed the entire Logger Training and Education Program in 2023.



Central Pine Lumber Co. Named 2023 Minnesota Logger of the Year

Central Pine Lumber Company of Brook Park, Minnesota has been named the 2023 Minnesota Logger of the Year by the Minnesota Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Implementation Committee (MN SIC).

The award was presented to Brad Rootkie at the Minnesota Logger Education Program workshop held in Virginia earlier this month.

The Logger of the Year Award recognizes outstanding independent logging contractor performance with the purpose of honoring Minnesota's competent professional independent logging contractors. The formal nomination clearly demonstrates that Rod Enberg and his crew are recognized by their peers for professionalism, commitment to sustainable forestry, using best business management practices, trade organization involvement, fostering excellent landowner and forester relationships, and for their exceptional community outreach activities.

"Brad Rootkie and Central Pine Lumber Company deserves the 2023 Minnesota Logger of the Year award," said MN SIC chair Richard Moore, Land Commissioner of Beltrami County. "He exemplifies the high standards set forth by the Minnesota SFI State Implementation Committee (SIC) with their attention to safety, best management practices, and communication with landowners."

Rootkie has long been involved in associations and training to improve the logging industry in the state. He joined the Minnesota Logger Education Program over 25 years ago, just as the program was starting out. Rootkie has also been a Timber Producers Association member for over 15 years, serving on the Board of Directors and the committee to organize the North Star Expo, Minnesota's largest logging equipment show.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® is a forest sustainability certification organization operating in the U.S. and Canada that works across four pillars: standards, conservation, community, and education. With third-party forest certification, an independent organization like SFI develops standards of good forest management, and independent auditors ensure that forest operations comply with those standards. SFI has certified more than 370 million acres to its standard in the United States and Canada. Minnesota has the second highest certified forest land base in North America.

Rootkie accepted the award on behalf of Central Pine Lumber Company and graciously acknowledged his crew helped him achieve this award. As highlighted by Greg Beck, Pine County Land Commissioner in his nomination letter, "Brad has a long-term retention of his employees and working with Brad and his crew has been a positive experience."

Central Pine Lumber Co. joins the ranks of a long list great Minnesota Loggers that have been conveyed this award. He will now be entered into the competition for the Forest



Central Pine Lumber Company went on to win the Forest Resources Association's Lake States Regional Outstanding Logger of the Year Award but was not successful for the national award. Many past winners have earned both distinctions, proving that Minnesota loggers are known nation-wide for their professionalism and dedication to Sustainable forestry.



- 2023 – **Central Pine Lumber Co.** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2022 – **Enberg Logging** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2021 – **Kimball's Logging** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2020 – **Fjeran Forest Products** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2019 – **Jeremy Stecker (JATCO)** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2018 – **Cliff Shermer** – FRA National Winner
- 2017 – **Dobbs Logging** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2016 – **Hasbargen Logging** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2015 – **Greg Cook Logging** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2014 – **Scheff Logging & Trucking** – Harvested Capitol Xmas Tree
- 2013 – **John Rolle Logging** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2012 – **Erickson Timber Products** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2011 – **M & R Chips, Inc.** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2010 – **Lovdahl & Sons, LLC**
- 2009 – **Berthiaume Logging** – FRA National Winner
- 2008 – **Pittack Logging, Inc.** – FRA Regional Winner
- 2007 – **McCabe Forest Products**
- 2006 – **Rieger Logging, Inc.**

Forest Landowners

The Minnesota SIC Private Forest Landowner Manual is our vehicle to connect to landowners, share the SFI story, and provide landowners with information to help them make land management decisions. The Manual was revised this year to include new requirements of the 2022 Standard, including sections on fire management, the Lake States FECV Assessment, carbon and climate change, and an overview on Indigenous history and the location of reservations across the state.

Sustainable Forestry - A Management Guide for Private Forest Landowners helps private landowners of Minnesota's forested land manage their woodlands to meet their forest goals and to help ensure the future health and viability of those forests. The over 200,000 family forest landowners in Minnesota play a significant role in the management responsibility for nearly 40% of the state's forested land.

This Guide helps them understand forest management terminology and options, as well as provide them with information on additional resources on Minnesota's forests, wildlife, plants, and waters. It includes information on sustainable forestry, establishing goals, setting up harvest activities, following forest management guidelines, and being aware of rare and endangered plant and animal species.

To view the guide visit: <https://www.mnsfi.org/landowner-manual>.

MINNESOTA SFI IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE UPDATES LAKE STATES FECV ASSESSMENT

Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) certified organizations have been supporting biodiversity conservation since their initial certification to the Fiber Sourcing standard. While some of the Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (FECV) related requirements in the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard did not change, the 2022 SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard introduces new requirements and approaches to promote and conserve FECVs.

organizations operating in similar geographies, with similar markets and similar forest ecosystems increases efficiency and provides regional consistency in messaging and forest management practices.

The initial assessment found that of the 270 identified G1/G2 species and ecosystems documented by NatureServe in the Lake States, only seven species and three ecosystems could be negatively impacted by forest management activities (Figure 3). In Minnesota, two ecosystems and four species could potentially be impacted.

Summaries of those potentially impacted FECVs can be found in the assessment available at www.mnsfi.org/lake-states-region.

Figure 3: FECVs Potentially Negatively Impacted by Forest Management

Common Name	Minnesota	Michigan	Wisconsin
Northern Long-Eared Myotis	Impacted	Impacted	Impacted
Karner Blue	Possibly Impacted	No Impact	Impacted
Little Goblin Moonwort	Impacted	Impacted	Impacted
Frosted Elfin	Not Found	Possibly Impacted	Impacted
An Ambersnail	Not Found	Impacted	Not Found
Indiana Myotis	Not Found	Impacted	Not Found
Jack Pine / Prairie Forbs Barrens	Impacted	Impacted	Impacted
Northern White-cedar – Yellow Birch Forest	Impacted	Impacted	Impacted
Laurentian Pine Barrens	Not Listed	Impacted	Possibly Impacted

The Assessment must be updated annually to reflect changes in listings or threats. The update was conducted in 2023.

These materials will be used in FECV-specific training for wood producers, loggers, and foresters. The Assessment was

SFI Implementation Committees (SICs) provide an opportunity for SFI-certified organizations to collaboratively leverage activities to meet SFI certification requirements in a cost efficient, expeditious and mutually beneficial way. Multilateral cooperation amongst SFI-certified

also incorporated into state SIC Landowner manuals and made available to other entities who routinely work with non-industrial private forest landowners.

SFI SIC Community Projects

2023 Minnesota SFI Implementation Committee Research – Family Forest Harvest Barriers

The SIC this year helped fund a study of the Barriers and Opportunities for Timber Harvesting on Small Family Forests in Northern Minnesota by University of Minnesota

Master’s Degree Student William P. Sauerer and Dr. Charlie Blinn.

Fully one-third of forestland ownership in Minnesota and over 5.3 million acres is

comprised of private, non-industrial family forests. Of this ownership segment, the majority (65%) of all family forests are found on less than 20-acre parcels. Owners of these forests commonly have alternative perspectives and land stewardship objectives which are focused on amenity and aesthetic values (e.g., natural beauty, recreational opportunity, privacy, wildlife habitat and biodiversity) rather than traditional timber production-based forest management goals.

Forest2Tap

Forest to Tap (F2T) is a non-profit based, free program planned and supported by a diverse group of natural resource interests (including the Minnesota SFI SIC) whose common denominator is the knowledge that good forest management – including planting, harvesting, and stewardship – results in clean water for wildlife, communities, businesses, and ultimately great beer.



The program is focused on providing information about how good forest management practices provide clean water by reaching targeted audiences through local community

breweries. Through increased community understanding and acceptance, F2T partners

While timber harvesting is almost universally low in priority, it is often still required to achieve many of the landowner’s objectives.

They are investigating what are the factors that most commonly contribute to a logging business owner’s willingness to bid on timber sales, what are the major barriers to timber harvest operations on small forest tracts, and how can those be addressed.

hope for increased knowledge of, and continued support for responsible forest management throughout the region.

Nine breweries located throughout the Mississippi Headwaters basin launched the F2T program in 2019. The program anticipated



expansion to include additional breweries in Minnesota, including those within the Lake Superior Watershed.

The Forest to Tap Program utilizes the strong connection between great forests, great water, and great beer to educate the public on the importance of responsibly managed forests.

SIC members participated in the annual Arbor Day red pine seedling giveaway at

