



BENEFITS OF FSC CERTIFICATION THROUGH THE TRUST TO CONSERVE NORTHEAST FORESTLANDS

The Trust established the Master Logger Certification Program in 1999, the first international certification to recognize the key role loggers play in the forest products chain

In addition to providing Master Logger Certification the Trust also holds FSC Group Chain of Custody, Forest Management, and Controlled Wood certificates. We are building a network of certified loggers, landowners, and wood manufacturers throughout the northeast whose activities will create economic opportunities for all our members.

The Trust offers these certification services to support landowners, manufacturers, or logging companies who own and are employed in the forest. We recognize the environmental and social benefits of maintaining working forestland.

The Trust has taken a leadership role in developing markets for the ecosystem services provided by working forests. Our goal is to provide our member landowners with the opportunity to earn revenue through forest management and other environmental benefits resulting from the responsible stewardship of their land.

Our member landowners work with third-party certified loggers. Certified loggers have the knowledge and skills needed to help you realize your objectives for your property, and certified loggers consistently meet the environmental standards required by FSC

FSC certification is an internationally recognized and respected system for promoting environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

1013 certificates, representing 331.96 million acres of forest in 81 countries, are certified to FSC standards. The United States holds 112 of the certificates representing 9.75% of the certified lands worldwide.

FSC is the fastest growing forest certification system in the world.

FSC provides a credible Chain of Custody system for tracking forest products from their origin in the forest to their end-use.

This system of manufacturers and retailers is growing. There are currently 19,313 Chain of Custody certificates in 105 countries (3,781 in the US or 19.6% of total).



THE TRUST TO CONSERVE NORTHEAST FORESTLANDS

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Forest Management Group Certificate

The Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands is committed to facilitating the forest management of our certified group of landowners in accordance with the Forest Stewardship Council-US Principles and Criteria.

VISION

Enhancing the health of the working forest through exceptional accountability.

- We believe that third-party certification is the foundation of responsible forest management and harvesting.
- We believe that third-party certification will support the development of new markets and opportunities for landowners, loggers and wood processors.
- We believe that the working forests of the northeast, and the people and businesses who manage them, deserve the right to participate fully in this vision through low-cost access to forest certification.



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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Staff Member	Title	Phone	E-Mail	Purpose
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Jessica Clark	Membership Services	207-688-8195	jessica@maineloggers.com	Back-up support and troubleshooting



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(RA-FM/COC-001881)

<http://www.tcnf.org>

SYNOPSIS OF FSC PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

	FSC Principle	TCNF Expectation
1.	Compliance with laws and FSC principles	Member landowners will comply with local, state, and federal laws and with FSC Principles
2.	Tenure and use rights and responsibilities	Member landowners will hold legal title and respect traditional or established land uses
3.	Indigenous peoples' rights	Member landowners will follow all laws and treaties regarding protections of indigenous peoples as well as cultural and archeological resources.
4.	Community relations and workers' rights	Member landowners keep community and affected parties informed. Workers' rights and safety are protected.
5.	Benefits from the forest	Member landowners seek to strengthen and diversify the local economy, and avoid dependence on a single forest product.
6.	Environmental impact	Member landowners protect and enhance important ecological components of the forest
7.	Management plan	Member landowners will develop and implement comprehensive forest management plans
8.	Monitoring and Assessment	Member landowners will assist the Trust in the monitoring and assessment of group practices
9.	Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests	Member landowners will identify and protect unique natural communities on their property
10.	Plantations	Member landowners will not convert natural forests to plantations or use genetically modified trees



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Third-Party Certifications of Logging Companies

Smart Logging Standard*	Master Logger Goal**	Expectations
Legal Requirements	Document Harvest Operations Planning	Pre- and post-harvest planning, supported by documentation, is utilized to ensure compliance with laws, conformity with land-owner objectives, and protection of site
Harvest Planning and Monitoring		
Harvest Practices	Protect Water Quality	Harvest practices meet or exceed BMP's for protecting critical resources
	Maintain Soil Productivity	
	Sustain Forest Ecosystems	Non-timber values and unique biological features of site are protected or enhanced.
Community Values	Manage Forest Aesthetics	Logger exhibits an aesthetic sensitivity and protects cultural and historic features of the landscape
Occupational Health and Safety	Ensure Workplace Safety	Workplace safety is of paramount importance. The company has a safety plan, workers are properly trained and equipped, and safety issues are regularly discussed.
Continuous Improvement and Innovation	Demonstrate Continuous Improvement	Logger utilizes continual evaluation and creative problem solving
Business Viability	Ensure Business Viability	Logger maintains ethical business practices and has an up to date business plan

* SmartLogging is an internationally-recognized certification administered by the Rainforest Alliance.

** The Trust holds the first SmartLogging certification issued by the Rainforest Alliance. Every Northeast Master Logger is also covered by the Trust's SmartLogging certificate.

The FSC Controlled Wood Standards are embedded in both the SmartLogging and Master Logger Certifications.



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Six Steps to Land Certification

Step 1. Interested landowner or company recruiter contacts the Trust

The Trust will contact the landowner after receiving the initial inquiry.

Step 2. The Trust will mail an information packet to the landowner

The packet will explain the expectations for member landowners and the process for certifying new members. The Trust will follow-up with a phone call to determine landowner's interest in membership. Interested landowners will submit their management plan to the Trust, or, if they do not have one, the Trust will direct them to sources of assistance for obtaining a management plan.

Step 3. The Trust reviews the landowner's forest management plan

The management plan will be reviewed against the Forest Management Plan Template. The Template requires the inclusion of specific types of information but does not dictate the objectives of management or the specific practices to be implemented as long as the plan complies with FSC-US Principles and Criteria. Any changes needed in the plan will be communicated to the landowner.

Step 4. An on-site visit is conducted

The visit will be conducted upon receipt of the plan and as soon as is practical for the landowner and the Trust. The purpose of the visit will be to see examples of current and past management and to review landowner goals and plan implementation, as well as to identify any areas of concern needing improvement or modification, and to agree to a schedule for proceeding.

Step 5. The landowner signs the Acknowledgement Letter

The letter, provided by the Trust, states the requirements for entry into the certified group and the responsibilities of the landowner member and the Trust. It is signed by the landowner and kept on file by the Trust. A copy of the letter is provided to the Rainforest Alliance (the FSC auditor).

Step 6. The landowner becomes a member of the Trust's FSC Forest Management Group

The certification is valid for five years. The landowner can purchase signs from the Trust that can be placed on their property to display their commitment to forest management.



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Forest Management Plan Template

TCNF FSC Group Forest Management Certificate Required Elements of Member Forest Management Plans	
General Property Information	Non-timber Resource Planning Considerations
Landowner	Threatened and endangered species, rare or exemplary natural communities
Plan Preparer	Fish and wildlife habitat
Plan Date	Representative Ecosystems*
Planning period	High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF)*
State, Town and County	Water quality, wetlands, riparian areas
Tax map information	Historical, cultural, archaeological sites
Parcel location	Recreational Opportunities
	Aesthetic quality
Acreage Summary	Forest Health
Forestland (productive)	Other important natural features
Reserved forestland (productive)	
Noncommercial/unproductive forestland	Stand Descriptions
Non-forested area	Cover type
Water bodies	Stand area
Wetlands	Stand Composition and structure
Developed land	Stand Age/history
Agricultural land	Stand health
	Stand volume
Maps	Stand stocking
Boundaries, Forest Types, Topography,	Stand quality
Soils, Roads, Wetlands, Riparian areas	Growth rate
Critical habitat, Cultural features	Long range silvicultural objectives
General Conditions of the Woodlot	Prescriptions and Recommendations
General woodland description/history	Stand prescriptions
Boundary lines	Rate of Annual Harvest and Species Selection
Terrain/Hydrology	Harvest Methods and Equipment
Watershed name/position	Recommendations to protect environmental values
Soils information	Other management activities
Access	Project schedule
Landscape level considerations	
Legal Obligations	Monitoring
Field Methods Statement	Plan monitoring and revision
	* Applies only to properties exceeding 2470 acres (1000 ha)



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RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUST AND MEMBER LANDOWNERS IN THE CERTIFIED GROUP

MEMBER LANDOWNERS:

<i>Plan</i>	long-term goals and objectives that are compatible with your needs and the FSC-US Principles & Criteria.
<i>Implement</i>	the long-term goals and objectives in your management plan
<i>Utilize</i>	third-party certified loggers when you harvest
<i>Communicate</i>	any changes in the management or ownership of your property to the Trust
	any issues with loggers, neighbors, and regulators to the Trust regarding the management of your property
<i>Notify</i>	the Trust prior to the initiation of harvest or site-disturbing activity such as road building.
<i>Respond</i>	to requests for annual reports from the Trust

THE TRUST:

<i>Provide</i>	the tools to manage your land according to the FSC-US Principles & Criteria
	a management plan template for you to follow
<i>Monitor</i>	the management of your land annually
	harvest operations on your land at least once during active harvesting
<i>Represent</i>	your interests in communications with the certifier
<i>Communicate</i>	changes in FSC requirements
<i>Notify</i>	you of any changes in our or your certification status



Highlights of

The Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestland's FSC Forest Management Group Certification Manual

The Group Certification Manual provides the forest management philosophy and guidelines that form the basis for the Trust's management of their FSC certificate. These philosophies and guidelines are consistent with the Trust's vision of *enhancing the working forest ecosystem through exceptional accountability*.

To ensure compliance with FSC Principles and provide a consistency of practices across all properties, a basic requirement of group membership is that all commercial harvests employ loggers certified through an internationally-recognized third-party system (at this writing, either Master Logger or SmartLogging certification).

The guidelines are based upon Forest Stewardship Council-US Principles and Guidelines (see the document, Synopsis of FSC Principles and Criteria found in this packet).

The guidelines are not strictly interpreted rules, however, each guideline must be addressed and the spirit of the guidelines must be met. Many guidelines are addressed by the Trust in the oversight of the FSC Group. Landowners are responsible for the parcel-level requirements.

Planning is an essential tool for meeting the spirit of the guidelines, and must be used to address the protection of soils and water resources, silvicultural practices, engineering practices, and the protection of biological resources.

The use of pesticides is restricted and must comply with FSC policy.

Each member landowner must have a current forest management plan that includes all the elements listed in the Forest Management Plan Template.

The Trust is responsible for the monitoring and assessment of group activities, but member landowners are expected to assist this effort through annual reporting and notification of harvesting activity.

To provide a chain of custody for products harvested from member properties timber sale agreements or other contracts to sell standing timber will include the TCNF FSC Certificate Code and the following language:

“The area encompassed by this timber sale is certified to the standards of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The landowner is a member in good standing of a Group Forest Management FSC Certificate (RA FM/COC-1881) administered by the Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands. Forest products from this sale may be delivered to the mill as “FSC certified” as long as the contractor hauling the forest products is FSC Chain-of-Custody (COC) certified. The purchaser is responsible for maintaining COC after leaving the sale area.”

A description of the known threatened or endangered plant and animal species, and rare and exemplary natural communities, is required of every member management plan. Landowners will consider “Reserve Designation” of rare or exemplary natural communities when management is incompatible with the important natural characteristics.

Landowners must use a written timber sale contract and harvest plan for all commercial harvests. The landowner must notify the Trust prior to all commercial harvests.

The Trust will conduct a monitoring visit at least once every five years, ideally during or following a harvest.

The manual contains the Trust's policy for the resolution disputes.

Copies of the Group Certification Manual are available upon request.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TRUST'S FSC GROUP FOREST MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE

Is there a fee for certifying my land?

Yes. However as a non-profit organization our goal is to provide access to forest certification at a minimal cost.

Is there a size limit for properties?

We have not set a limit on the size of member properties. Our staff capacity to monitor will be the determining factor.

Do I have to certify all the forestland I own?

No. You can decide which parcels to include.

How long does the certification process take?

Time varies dependent upon preparation. If you have a current management plan that complies with our management plan template the entire process can be completed in one to two months.

What if I don't have a management plan?

We will direct you to sources of assistance in your state.

If I certify my land will I receive higher prices for my trees?

In general, no, but we do believe that in the long run certified landowners will have access to a wider variety of markets, and the Trust, through its group certifications, will be growing the number of certified landowners, loggers, and processors throughout the region.

If I am certified will I have to open my land to the public?

No. The landowner retains control of the use of their property.

Where can I find more information about FSC certification?

The FSC International web site is at: <http://www.fsc.org/>, and the FSC- US web site is: <http://www.fscus.org/>. The FSC Standards for the northeastern US can be found at: http://www.fscus.org/standards_criteria/regional_standards.php. Yale University maintains a very informative web site on forest certification at: <http://www.yale.edu/forestcertification/faq.html>.