

Public notification

FSC® & SFI Forest Management Annual Surveillance Audit
for
Ontario Model Forests
in

Kemptville, Ontario, Canada

Date of notice: September 8th, 2025

Introduction

Preferred by Nature is conducting an FSC® and SFI forest management and chain of custody Annual Surveillance Audit of Ontario Model Forests located in Kemptville, Ontario, Canada. The evaluation will be conducted during the week of **October 20-29**.

Scope of Evaluation

The FSC® and SFI certification audit will assess the environmental, silvicultural and socioeconomic aspects of the forest management unit(s) managed by Ontario Model Forests,

using the FSC Standard for Small Scale Low-Intensity and Community Forests:

<https://ca.fsc.org/ca-en/forest-management/small-community-forest-standard>

and using the SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families and the group requirements:

https://forests.org/wp-content/uploads/Small-Scale-Module_REWORK_June-2021.pdf

Information on this FSC certificate holder is available on FSC's website:

<https://search.fsc.org/en/certificate/a0240000005sV9pAAE/>

Information on this SFI certificate holder is available on SFI's website:

<https://sfidatabase.org/org/eastern-ontario-forest-group>

Preferred by Nature is accredited by the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC) and by Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and this evaluation will follow procedures which have been approved by the Forest Stewardship Council® and by Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

Team Composition

The audit will be conducted by James Hallworth, R.P.F.

Steps and Schedule

Following is a short description of the evaluation process and a tentative agenda:

- Field visits – During the week of **October 20-29**, the audit team will conduct field visits of recent and active forest management operations on the certified area.
- Stakeholder and Indigenous communities/peoples' consultation – Throughout the fieldwork, the team will contact local stakeholders and indigenous communities/peoples regarding the forest management activities of the certificate holder in communities. This can include private interviews and discussions as well as public meetings.
- Final evaluation briefing – Prior to departure the team will meet with the certificate holder's forest managers and other parties to finalize their data collection and present preliminary findings.
- Draft report production – The audit team will produce a confidential draft report that will be circulated for comment to the certificate holder. This should occur within one month after completion of the evaluation.
- Certification decision – Upon receipt of comments on the draft report from the certificate holder forest managers, and other general stakeholder and indigenous communities/peoples' comments, Preferred by Nature will reach a certification decision. Barring unforeseen obstacles, this should occur by end December.

Your Comments Sought

As a part of the audit process, we invite stakeholders and indigenous communities/peoples to offer comments on the certificate holder's forest management activities in relation to conformance with the requirements of the forest management standard referenced above. **We welcome input, either public or confidential.** Your input will be valuable at any stage of the process, but we would prefer to receive your comments before the end of the on-site audit so that we can take them into consideration in reaching a certification decision. Your options for communicating your comments are as follows:

1. Meet with a Preferred by Nature audit team member before or during the audit.
2. Send comments to the Preferred by Nature staff person responsible for coordinating this audit (see contact info below).

Unless you request otherwise, these comments will be kept confidential, available only to FSC, SFI and Preferred by Nature staff.

Audit reports are made publicly available on both the FSC and SFI websites within 90 days following the audit. For past evaluation results, please visit <https://search.fsc.org/en/> and <https://sfidatabase.org/>.

Stakeholders who may wish to dispute any aspect of the forest certification process or decision can access PbN's Dispute Resolution Policy at www.preferredbynature.org

Contacting the audit team and Preferred by Nature

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