

Dear Colleagues,

As part of the stakeholder consultation process for the FSC assessment of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts we encourage you to complete a questionnaire, which is now available on Survey Monkey.Com. Please click the following link to view and complete the questionnaire

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=QX_2feJPmyZt6EHtN6zoq6UQ_3d_3d

Please feel free to distribute this message to other stakeholders who might be interested in providing feedback for this assessment.

More information about the upcoming assessment (originally sent March 6, 2009):

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts (MA) is seeking Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) endorsed re-certification for the State lands managed by the principal agencies of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs:

- Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)- Bureau of Forestry (BOF)
- DCR- Division of Water Supply Protection (DWSP)
- Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW)

Collectively these three agencies control approximately 550,000 acres of forest in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The findings of the first term (5 years) of FSC certification can be viewed in the certification report at

http://www.scs-certified.com/forestry/forest_certclients.html listed under the link for “Commonwealth of Massachusetts”.

Scope and Certification Evaluation Process

Scientific Certification Systems (SCS), a FSC-accredited certification body based in Emeryville, California, will conduct this FSC evaluation. Performance will be evaluated against the FSC Standard for Northeast Region V.9.0, available online at:

http://www.fscus.org/standards_criteria/regional_standards.php

The Evaluation Process Includes the Following Phases:

- a) Public notification and solicitation of comments on the certification applicant
- b) Audit planning and document review
- c) Field assessment - A representative sample of field sites and operations within the defined forest area are inspected
- d) Stakeholder consultation
- e) Synthesis of findings – Compliance with the standard is assessed and the certification decision is formulated
- f) Reporting– A report describing the evaluation process, findings, and certification decision is produced

The full certification report is posted to

http://www.scs-certified.com/forestry/forest_certclients.html, if re-certification is awarded.

Call for Public Participation

SCS welcomes comments on the forest management by the BOF, DWSP, and/or DFW or other topics **pertinent to their seeking FSC certification**, such as compliance with the legal, social, technical, and environmental requirements of the FSC standard or identification of High

Conservation Value Forests^[1] within forests administered by these agencies. Comments can be submitted via email, standard mail, or facsimile to:

Dave Wager
Director of Forest Management Certification
Scientific Certification Systems
145 Park Place, Point Richmond, CA 94801
Tel: 406-251-7049, Fax: 510-236-8598
e-mail: dwager@scscertified.com

All comments will be kept in strict confidence at the request of the commenter.

Dates and Deadlines

The field portion of the re-certification assessment is scheduled to commence during the week of April 6, 2009. Written comments are welcome at any point, but will be most useful in the certification process if received prior to April 6, 2009.

Public Meeting

A public meeting to provide a brief overview of the FSC forest management certification process and to solicit comments from interested parties will be held on April 6 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at John Augustus Hall (Cafeteria) in West Boylston, MA. John Augustus Hall is located at 180 Beaman Street (Route 140), West Boylston. Directions are available upon request from dwager@scscertified.com or by calling (508) 792-7423. Attendance to the public meeting is not necessary for your comments to be considered by the assessment team, in other words, written comment received on or before April 6- will be given the same level of consideration as oral comments received at the public meeting.

Dispute Resolution Procedure

As provided by the FSC Interim Dispute Resolution Protocol (Document 1.4.3) and the SCS Forest Conservation Program Quality Manual, dispute resolution procedures are in place and available to interested parties.

Additional Information

More information about FSC and SCS can be obtained from www.fsc.org and www.scscertified.com. Information about State of Massachusetts forestlands can be found on the EOEA Web site at <http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eoeesubtopic&L=4&L0=Home&L1=Agriculture%2c+Forestry%2c+Fishing+%26+Hunting&L2=Sustainable+Forest+Management&L3=Forest+Management+on+State+Lands&sid=Eoeea>.

^[1] High Conservation Value Forests possess one or more of the following attributes: a) forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant: concentrations of biodiversity values (eg. endemism, endangered species, refugia); and/or large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance b) forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems c) forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (eg. watershed protection, erosion control) d) forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (eg. subsistence, health) and/or critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities). Also see Principle 9, in the FSC Principles and Criteria.

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