

Proposal for USFS Consideration of Forest Certification through FSC and SFI

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Summary: We propose that the USFS Nantahala-Pisgah NF consider incorporating a statement into the plan revision that supports the trial or adoption of FSC and SFI certification standards as recently trialed and under development for public lands on Nicolet, Allegheny and other NF's.

Justification: FSC and SFI forest certification standards have been widely supported locally, nationally, and internationally by a multitude of stakeholders including Environmental NGO's, Forest Products companies, and Consumer Organizations. These certification standards are science based approaches to "sustainable forest management" that are widely recognized in society as valid assurances that wood fiber based products that qualify to these standards are owned, managed, and produced by ethically and environmentally sound entities and methods. These certification standards build a bridge between the general public and the complicated science behind the restoration of our forest resources. Also, these certification standards provide broadly accepted guidance on sensitive USFS plan components such as how to protect and enhance High Conservation Value areas on the forest landscape including State Natural Heritage Areas or others submitted by local stakeholders, while still achieving important restoration or other landowner objectives through timber harvest. Lastly, this is important for local economies – there are several local wood products businesses that are witnessing the development of long term sustained global demand for certified wood fiber. We believe the implementation of appropriately adapted forest certification standards on USFS Nantahala-Pisgah NF will help link the public to wood being harvested to accomplish restoration goals on NF lands, will provide a broadly accepted science based assurance for the sustainability of wood harvested on NF lands, and will provide local economies with additional sources of needed certified wood fiber.

Appendices: (submitting links to documentation ; will provide paper copies of documentation upon request)

Appendix A: "Adaptation of the FSC US Forest Stewardship Standard for the US Forest Service"

<https://us.fsc.org/preview.appendix-h-adaptation-of-the-fsc-us-forest-stewardship-standard-for-the-us-forest-service-draft-3.a-577.pdf>

Appendix B: "FSC US Forest Stewardship Standard for Forest Management in US"

<https://us.fsc.org/download.fsc-us-forest-management-standard-v1-0.95.htm>

Appendix C: Pinchot Institute "Evaluation of Applicability of FSC and SFI Standards on Five NF's"

<https://www.fs.fed.us/projects/forestcertification/full-report.pdf>

Appendix C: "SFI US Forest Management Standard in US"

<http://www.sfiprogram.org/sfi-standards/forest-management-standard/>