

# Sustainable Forestry Practices for Landowners in Washington



Produced by the Washington SFI Implementation Committee



## This guide is provided by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Implementation Committee of Washington.

The Implementation Committee is a coalition of Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Program Participants, along with representatives of conservation organizations, family forest landowners, loggers, independent forest products businesses, consulting foresters and members of the academic community.

The committee is working to ensure that forestland in Washington is managed wisely and will be available to meet the needs of future generations.

[www.wasfi.org](http://www.wasfi.org)

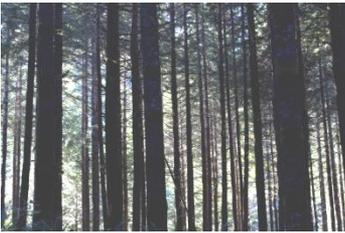
# Table of Contents

- 3    Doing What’s Right**
- 5    Giving You the Support to Succeed**
- 6    Let the Pros Do It**
- 7    Planning for the Future**
- 9    Washington Forest Practices Act and Best Management Practices**
- 10   Forest Biomass Utilization**
- 11   Invasive Exotic Plants and Animals**
- 12   Enhancing Wildlife Habitat**
- 14   Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value**
- 17   Appearance is Important**
- 18   Reducing Wildfire Risk**
- 19   American Tree Farm System®**
- 20   Climate Change and Carbon Sequestration**
- 21   Why Sustainable Forestry?**
- 22   Inconsistent Practices Investigation Procedures**

**Sustainable Forestry** – meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates reforestation and the managing, growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products and ecosystem services such as the conservation of soil, air and water quality, carbon, biological diversity, wildlife and aquatic habitat, recreation and aesthetics.

## Doing What's Right

There are over 43 million acres in Washington. Of that, about 22 million acres are forested. About 57 percent of the forested acres are owned by federal, state, and local governments. Over 21 percent are owned by private corporations and 22 percent by Native Americans and small landowners. If you are part of this last group, the following information is written specifically for you.



Your forestland provides you with many benefits. It may supply income for your family today or for your retirement tomorrow. Well-managed forests provide wildlife habitat, clean water, aesthetic benefits and recreation. Your forestland also helps provide your community and

our nation with the forest products needed for a growing economy. Together, these points capture the essence of sustainable forest management – managing and conserving our forest resources to meet the needs of society today without compromising the needs of tomorrow.

As one of 10 million family forest landowners in the United States, who own about 50 percent of the nation's timberland, your management decisions have an important impact on the forests of tomorrow. Putting sustainable forestry into practice on your land will help protect your investment while conserving its valuable resources.

### The Sustainable Forestry Initiative®

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI®) program guides the forest management of the majority of industrial forest landowners in the United States. A major goal of SFI subscribing companies is to ensure that future generations enjoy the same opportunities provided by the abundant forests that we enjoy today. These companies demonstrate their SFI commitment by improving forestry practices on industrial forestland and by promoting sustainable forestry practices with private forest landowners, foresters and loggers.

Sustainable forestry is the practice of land stewardship that integrates reforestation, growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees while protecting soil, water quality, wildlife and plant habitat as well as aesthetics for today and the future.

The SFI program was developed in 1994 to safeguard our forests through land stewardship in such a manner that they would meet the needs of our society today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Today, the SFI program is one of the world's most rigorous and widely applied standards of sustainable forestry.

SFI participants must subscribe to and report annually on their performance regarding the following twenty objectives:

- Forest Management Planning
- Forest Productivity
- Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources
- Conservation of Biological Diversity including Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value
- Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits
- Protection of Special Sites
- Efficient Use of Forest Resources
- Landowner Outreach
- Use of Qualified Resource and Qualified Logging Professionals
- Adherence to Best Management Practices
- Promote Conservation of Biological Diversity, Biodiversity Hotspots and High-Biodiversity Wilderness Areas
- Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Illegal Logging
- Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Fiber Sourced from Areas without Effective Social Laws
- Legal and Regulatory Compliance
- Forestry Research, Science and Technology
- Training and Education
- Community Involvement in the Practice of Sustainable Forestry
- Public Land Management Responsibilities
- Communications and Public Reporting
- Management Review and Continual Improvement

## Giving You the Support to Succeed

State forestry and wildlife agencies, programs like the American Tree Farm System® and Forestry and Natural Resources Extension and private forestry consultants will assist you in getting professional assistance for developing an effective forest management plan. To realize your land stewardship goals, your plan should be based on sustainable forestry principles.

### Some of the basic features of your plan:

- *Identify your specific goals and objectives.* Do you want to manage your forestland primarily for timber? Wildlife? Recreation? There are many more possibilities. Once you decide what is most important to you, it is then possible to develop a plan targeting your personal goals for your land.
- *Take an inventory of your forest resources and property.* Determine exactly what you have to manage by identifying your land's features: trees, wildlife habitat, streams and special sites.
- *Evaluate your objectives and decide on alternatives.* Begin by listing your objectives along with their benefits, the cost to implement them and how they will affect future decisions. This is an important step in preparing your final forest management plan.
- *Make your plan.* Put it in writing: what your goals are for the land, the timetable to meet those goals, and a list of forest management activities and their itemized expenses. Input and advice from a professional forester at this stage in the development of your plan will help assure that your goals are successfully achieved.
- *Implement your plan.* Now is when you put theory into action. Most plans will need some modification when implemented. Using a forestry professional or state forestry representative to assist you with implementation may be beneficial in helping you meet your objectives effectively and efficiently.

## Let the Pros Do It

Professional foresters and logging contractors are able to manage a complex and wide range of situations safely, economically and conscientiously. When it comes time to harvest, using the services of professional foresters and qualified logging professionals will go a long way to successfully applying the principles of sustainable forest management to your lands.

### Some of the expertise you should expect in a qualified or certified logging professional:

- Knowledge and compliance with federal, state and local laws regarding timber harvesting, environmental protection, safety, transportation and business.
- Knowledge and experience in meeting the legal requirements of the Washington Forest Practices Act (FPA) and Administrative Rules including forest fire prevention.



In addition, loggers must be up-to-date on technology and understand and implement the variety of regulations designed to protect natural resources and be able to manage people effectively. In short, a professional logger needs to be a good business-person and a good steward of the land.

The Master Logger Program (MLP) is administered by the Washington Contract Loggers Association, Inc. (WCLA). The MLP is a voluntary education program that accredits individuals and the company they represent. A Master Logger is an individual who completes 32 hours of initial classroom training in forest silviculture and ecology, logging safety, worker's compensation, Washington Forest Practice rules and logging business management. In addition, the individual must also have current training in first aid. To maintain Master Logger status, the individual is required to earn at



least 8 hours of continuing education per year. A directory of Master Loggers and the company they represent as well as additional information about the MLP and WCLA is available at [www.loggers.com](http://www.loggers.com).

## Planning for the Future

### Reforestation and afforestation

In planning for the future, you should consider both reforestation and afforestation as ways to enhance the productivity of your land.

Reforestation is the restocking of a forest after removal of trees through harvesting, wildfire or other means by planting or natural regeneration.

Afforestation is the establishment of a forest or stand in an area where the preceding vegetation or land use was not forest (e.g., pasture, crop land, etc.). Over the years, if your objectives for your land change from agriculture or other activities think about planting these lands to improve your future income, decrease the potential for erosion and improve wildlife habitat and biodiversity.



It is best to plan your reforestation method before harvesting. Reforesting promptly is key to providing a sustainable supply of forest products, maximizing future income from the land, and guaranteeing our beautiful forests for all the generations who come after us.

Landowners should make a plan with their professional forester or logger, addressing harvesting techniques and expected products before a harvest is begun. This will ensure that the appropriate forest harvesting technology and other best practices are used to minimize waste and prepare the site for efficient reforestation.

State and federal cost-share programs can help offset the costs associated with site preparation and replanting. Check with your professional forester or the Washington Department of Natural Resources to learn what cost-share incentives may be available. The Washington

Department of Natural Resources also explains financial incentives for private forestland owners at [www.dnr.wa.gov](http://www.dnr.wa.gov).



Reforestation costs (site preparation, seedling costs, planting costs, etc.) up to \$10,000 per year may be deducted from income in the year incurred for federal tax purposes. Additionally, reforestation costs in excess of the \$10,000 may be deducted from annual income over an 84 month period. Special rules may apply to lands held in trusts and estates. Check with your forestry, professional or tax advisor to learn more about this and other tax incentives for growing timber.

### Some methods to consider for your reforestation goals

The landowner is responsible for successful reforestation after harvesting. Washington's Forest Practices Act requires strict tree planting standards, timetables and established trees "free-to-grow" within six years after logging completion.

- Tree planting: planting of tree seedlings, either by hand or machine, ensures sufficient tree establishment as required by Washington law. Planting gives you more control of forest composition and stocking.
- Advanced natural regeneration: in some areas, harvesting practices may retain enough tree stocking that planting is not necessary. Planning for the protection of existing trees and seedlings in the forest understory during and after the harvest is critical when using this method.
- Natural regeneration: when approved by the State Forester, natural methods may be used. Successful natural reforestation requires careful, site-specific pre-harvest planning and post-harvest monitoring.

If you want to pass on your land to the next generation with a healthy growing forest, while meeting any financial goals you may have, implementing a reforestation plan is a must.

# Washington Forest Practices Act and Best Management Practices

The Clean Water Act, originally enacted in 1972 and amended in 1977 and 1987, requires forestry operations to be conducted in a manner that does not impact water quality. Following all requirements in the Forest Practices Act (FPA), required by law in Washington state, and Administrative Rules assures compliance with the Clean Water Act, as well as other Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Forestry. The Forest Practices Act and Administrative Rules can be found on the Washington Department of Natural Resources website at [www.dnr.wa.gov](http://www.dnr.wa.gov). A wealth of other information and assistance can also be found there including the DNR's Small Forest Landowner Office at [www.dnr.wa.gov](http://www.dnr.wa.gov). Other sources of information include:

- The professional forester who assisted you with your management plan and/or is buying your timber
- The logging professional who will be harvesting your timber
- The Washington Farm Forestry Association at [www.wafarmforestry.com](http://www.wafarmforestry.com)
- WADNR Forest Practices illustrated at [www.dnr.wa.gov/forest-practices-illustrated](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/forest-practices-illustrated)
- The person or organization which gave you this brochure



Forestry BMPs in Washington cover a range of forest management activities including planning, roads, water quality protection, harvesting, reforestation, pesticide use and other silvicultural management activities. The Washington

Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) monitors implementation of the Best Management Practices required by the Forest Practices Act and has compiled compliance data on this over time. SFI member companies have verifiable BMP monitoring systems using WDNR and other sources of information to measure the effectiveness of BMP implementation and to

identify steps to take for improvement. Key areas for potential BMP implementation improvement have been identified in these programs to include the following:

- Identification and protection of riparian management areas along streams
- Removal and stabilization of stream crossings following use
- Limiting harvest and hauling activities during extreme weather events
- Restoring natural drainage patterns after harvest

As a landowner, you should carefully monitor the activities of any contractor performing forestry activities on your property, as well as your own activities, to stay within compliance of the Forest Practices Act.

## Forest Biomass Utilization



As the demand for renewable energy sources continues to grow, landowners should weigh the benefits and costs of biomass utilization from their forestland. One such consideration is residue harvesting following a conventional sawtimber harvest. With careful planning and by following

Washington's forestry BMPs, this can be accomplished using the same landing and road systems with very little impact to the site. Additionally, residue harvesting should have little impact on site productivity since the high-nutrient portions of the trees (stumps, leaves, roots and limbs) will remain, and such harvests are spread over time.

Benefits of biomass utilization following harvests or through other operations include:

- Reduction in dependency on fossil fuels while satisfying growing energy needs
- Creation of jobs and business opportunities
- Income for landowners from biomass sales
- Decreased site preparation costs, as harvested sites are left cleaner
- Opportunities for low to no cost timber stand improvement

- Increased forest health by reducing threats and/or restoration costs from fire, disease/pest infestations, invasive species and storm damage

Landowners should work closely with their resource professionals to ensure that this type of harvest is right for their property and that the activities follow the state's BMPs.

## Invasive Exotic Plants and Animals

Invasive exotic plants and animals are those that are found outside their native range; they can potentially have negative ecological, financial and social impacts. Invasive species pose a threat to the survival and reproduction of native species and can decrease forest productivity, complicate forest management, and degrade biodiversity, wildlife habitat and the visual value of your forest.



Invasive species typically thrive due to geographic and climatic conditions similar to those of their native range and a lack of predators and diseases. Effective control can only be accomplished when you know what species to be on the lookout for and how to identify the species or their impacts. There are numerous invasive species in Washington – plants, animals, insects and diseases. Examples of some of the more common ones found in Washington are Scotch Broom, knapweed, and thistle.

### Control measures

An integrated pest management program is the best approach for control, and may involve the following:

- Prevent introduction
- Early detection and rapid response
- Surveillance, control and management
- For plants – rehabilitation and restoration
- Maintain forest health and vigor
- Using resource professionals



Preventing the introduction of non-native species is by far the most effective and economical control measure, therefore you should have an effective, ongoing surveillance program in place. If an invasive species should get established, the second most important control measure is a rapid response to

prevent its spread and eradicate the unwelcome competitor. Depending on the invasive species and particular circumstances, control measures can involve one or a combination of methods – mechanical (e.g., hand-picking, traps, tillage), biological (e.g., promoting beneficial predators), chemical (e.g., pesticides). Following this, it may be beneficial to establish and/or release fast-growing native plants that can out-compete any surviving invasive plants while preventing soil erosion. Maintaining a healthy forest through sound forest management practices will increase your forest's ability to combat invasive species.

Contact a resource professional to assist you in learning more about invasive species, their identification and control. Listed below are some resources:

- Washington Invasive Species Council at [www.invasivespecies.wa.gov](http://www.invasivespecies.wa.gov)
- Your local office of the Cooperative Extension Service
- The Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board at [www.nwcb.wa.gov](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov)
- Pacific Northwest Invasive Plant Council at [www.pnw-ipc.org](http://www.pnw-ipc.org)
- Publication – *Meeting the Challenge: Invasive Plants in Pacific Northwest Ecosystems* – [www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw\\_gtr694.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw_gtr694.pdf)

## Enhancing Wildlife Habitat

Many landowners are committed to growing forests to ensure that future generations of Americans may experience the same abundant forests and wildlife we enjoy today.

Because forestry practices can be tailored to improve a wide variety of wildlife habitats while providing a continuous source of revenue, including timber production, many forest owners have successfully integrated mutually beneficial timber and wildlife habitat management on their lands.



## Maintaining biological diversity



Among other benefits, maintaining biological diversity is another means of enhancing wildlife habitats on your land. The SFI standard defines biodiversity as: “The variety and abundance of life forms, processes, functions, and structures of plants, animals and other living organisms, including the relative complexity of species, communities, gene pools and ecosystems at spatial scales that range from local to regional to global.”

While many believe that biodiversity is most effectively addressed at the watershed or larger level, there are opportunities to manage and contribute to biodiversity at all levels – stand, forest, watershed, landscape and global. Landowners can influence compositional and structural diversity at the stand and forest levels through management choices. Techniques landowners can use to ensure biodiversity involve maintaining:

- A mix of habitat and cover types – both terrestrial and aquatic
- A mix of species – both flora and fauna
- A distribution of age classes within and between stands
- Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (FECVs)
- Unique stand features such as snags, mast trees, etc.

## Keys to making this happen:

- Understanding the habitat(s) needed by the species you are interested in attracting to, or protecting on, your land
- Providing these habitats through forest management practices

Who can help you? Natural resource professionals can provide the careful planning and assistance to meet your production, biodiversity and wildlife enhancement objectives.



### Assistance you may expect from natural resource professionals:

- Help determine, refine, or modify your forest management plan to include objectives for wildlife and timber.
- Supply you with technical guidance to provide or protect habitat for the wildlife you are interested in attracting to your land.
- Tailor forest management activities to meet your wildlife habitat goals.
- Provide access to cost-sharing programs that enhance wildlife.

### Where can you go to find assistance from a natural resource professional?

- Private natural resource consultants
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) at [www.wdfw.wa.gov](http://www.wdfw.wa.gov)
- Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) at [www.dnr.wa.gov](http://www.dnr.wa.gov)
- Your local office of the Cooperative Extension Service

## Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value

### What are Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (FECVs)?

Certain places in the 22 million acres of Washington forestland are valuable for reasons other than their potential to give us paper, packaging, lumber and other wood products. These forests might be home to a globally rare plant, animal or community. If a plant, animal or community is found to be very rare in the world and especially vulnerable to extinction, then it may be classified as imperiled or critically imperiled.



These designations are similar to the threatened and endangered designations afforded to species protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). It is not unusual for imperiled or critically imperiled species and communities with no protection under the ESA to be rarer than some of the species that are protected under the ESA. For example, the wayside aster is listed as a federally threatened species protected under the ESA, but is not classified as globally imperiled or critically

imperiled. On the other hand, the Pacific walker mussel is globally critically imperiled, but is not protected under the ESA.

### How do you know if you have rare species inhabiting your land?

There are more than 40 plants and animals that are federally listed as threatened or endangered in Washington. Threatened and endangered species can thrive in managed forests. In fact, active management is necessary for the survival of some species. It is up to landowners to take the steps necessary to identify and conserve the habitat that these species need.

Being able to recognize habitat characteristics can be as important as or even more important than being able to identify the threatened or endangered plant or animal. On-line resources exist to help you find out which rare, threatened, endangered or imperiled species may be found on your land are listed below:

- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) at [www.wdfw.wa.gov](http://www.wdfw.wa.gov)
- NatureServe at [www.natureserve.org](http://www.natureserve.org)
- WA State Species and Communities of Special Concern [www.wasfi.org/species-factsheets](http://www.wasfi.org/species-factsheets)

### What do you have to do if you have rare species inhabiting your land?

You are not required by law to do anything for imperiled or critically imperiled species and communities unless that species is listed under the Endangered Species Act, and/or listed under applicable state laws requiring protection. Many of these rare species and communities can thrive in managed forests with no special considerations. Others however may

require specific management actions. At a minimum, when planning a harvest or other forest management activity where imperiled or critically imperiled species and communities occur, you should communicate the location and protection measures associated with these sites to your logger or contractor.



To learn more about threatened / endangered species and what you may be required to do, and imperiled / critically imperiled species and communities that may occur on your land, contact the Washington Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, or NatureServe.

## Definitions

**Conservation** – 1. Protection of plant and animal habitat; 2. The management of a renewable natural resource with the objective of sustaining its long-term productivity in perpetuity while providing for human use compatible with sustainability of the resource.

**Critically Imperiled** – A plant or animal or community that is globally extremely rare or, because of some factor, especially vulnerable to extinction or elimination.

**Imperiled** – A plant or animal or community that is globally rare or, because of some factor, very vulnerable to extinction or elimination.

**Threatened and Endangered** – Listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, and/or listed under applicable state laws requiring protection.

## Characteristics of special sites

Your land may hold sites that have ecological, geological, cultural or historical significance and which should be protected for future generations. Such sites may include cemeteries, waterfalls, Indian mounds and unusual plant communities or habitats. By preserving these special sites you can enhance the biodiversity of your property for all who enjoy it, including humans, plants and animals, while ensuring these sites will not disappear

from the landscape. Your resource professionals can assist you in identifying and protecting these special sites.

Some examples of non-forested sites that you may want to consider protecting as special sites are caves, seepage slopes, rock outcrops, riparian areas, water bodies (creeks, rivers, pools and ponds) and natural openings in the forest such as prairies, balds, glades and dry sandhills. These sensitive sites harbor many of the critically imperiled and imperiled aquatic and terrestrial species. Temporary pools that fill up with water in the spring are especially important features that may contain rare, threatened and endangered species. All of these areas are important and are often very easy to work around.

## Appearance is Important

The aesthetic appeal of your management activities can make an impact on the perception of forest management in your community and across the state. Managing aesthetically can also be integrated with your plans for wildlife habitat, threatened and endangered species, biological diversity, FECVs and special sites.

### Considerations in visual quality management

Forestry operations are highly visible and subject to the perceptions and opinions of an environmentally aware public. Careful planning is recommended as a proactive approach to improving forest aesthetics.

Conducting forestry operations of all types in an aesthetically acceptable manner is important to the future of forestry. Though it is impossible to list everything a landowner might do to manage the visual quality of management activities, here are some of the more significant potential actions for consideration:

- Do not allow trash to accumulate around the site.
- During a harvest, use all fiber designated for removal that is economically and operationally feasible.



- Do not allow excessive amounts of mud on public paved roads.
- Keep logging slash at least 50 feet away from lakes, recreational waterways and public roads.
- In aesthetically sensitive locations, minimize rutting or churning of the soil even if there are no water quality concerns.
- A modified harvest plan may be required in sensitive high-visibility areas such as along designated scenic highways.
- Locate loading decks out of public view.
- Configure harvests with irregular shapes to break up the impact and match existing terrain.
- Consider alternative harvesting systems and vegetative screens in highly sensitive areas.

## Reducing Wildfire Risk

Reducing wildfire risk for your forestland is important. The Washington Department of Natural Resources is the agency primarily responsible for the detection, suppression and prevention of wildfires. But landowners have important ways they can protect their forestland:

- Reducing hazardous fuels through prescribed burns can reduce wildfire risk to your forestland.
- Installing firebreaks can slow or stop the spread of wildfires on your property. Firebreaks can also provide access for firefighting equipment.
- Landowners can reduce hazardous fuels along roadways and property entrances.
- Control access by installing gates and other barriers to limit trespassers and unwanted visitors on your property.
- If you do not live near your forestland or do not visit it often, you should consider getting another set of eyes such as an adjacent landowner to alert you to wildfire or other potential problems they may see on your land.

WASHINGTON STATE WILDLAND FIRE PROTECTION 10-YEAR STRATEGIC PLANSUMMARY at

[www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/rp\\_wildfire\\_strategic\\_plan.pdf](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/rp_wildfire_strategic_plan.pdf)

# American Tree Farm System®

An organization that can aid you in succeeding as a responsible landowner is the American Tree Farm System® (ATFS). ATFS was created to promote the growing of renewable forest resources on private lands, while protecting environmental benefits and increasing public understanding of the benefits of productive forestry.



The American Tree Farm System has over 95,000 family forest owners totaling more than 25 million acres of non-industrial private forestland certified in the program in 46 states. There are approximately 750 Certified Tree Farms in Washington. Since 1941, the ATFS has recognized

landowners for their commitment to sustainable forest management.

One of the program's main features is providing information, education and assistance to family forest landowners regarding forest management practices that will sustain or enhance forest productivity, wildlife habitat, water quality and outdoor recreation. Participating landowners, foresters and government representatives can help you find the assistance you need to accomplish your land management goals, develop and implement a land management plan and certify your land as a Tree Farm.

When becoming a member of the ATFS, you must show that you follow the BMPs required by the Forest Practices Act when performing forest management activities, and take measures to provide wildlife habitat and protect biodiversity whenever possible. You reap not only the rewards of good management, but also the benefits of belonging to a strong and knowledgeable group that's committed to protecting the environment. Another consideration is a growing preference among forest product customers for certified wood.

In August 2008, the ATFS gained the endorsement of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). PEFC is an international organization that evaluates and recognizes national forest certification systems. The SFI program has also been endorsed by PEFC.

As part of the PEFC endorsement, the ATFS has a mutual recognition agreement with the SFI program, which will promote and expand the practice of sustainable forest management on small and large ownerships. Under this agreement, as an ATFS member, you will have the potential for greater access to certified wood markets both in the United States and abroad.

For more information on the American Tree Farm System, log on to [www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org).

## Climate Change and Carbon Sequestration

Climate change is a topic of much discussion these days. Greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), are thought to be a significant cause. Climate change may be caused by natural factors or processes, such as changes in the sun's intensity, changes in ocean circulation or by human activities that affect the composition of the earth's atmosphere (burning fossil fuels which release greenhouse gases, etc.).

Your carbon footprint, put simply, is the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> your activities generate. To reduce your carbon footprint you must reduce emissions both direct and indirect, promote storage or sequestration, and when possible, avoid emissions altogether.

### Forests sequester carbon

Forests and forest products are a store of carbon, as trees absorb CO<sub>2</sub> through photosynthesis as they grow. Since the amount of carbon in the world is a constant, when there is more carbon sequestered in long-term sinks such as trees and forest products, there is less carbon going into the atmosphere.

When wood is burned for energy, or when trees die and decay, or when wood products reach the end of their useful life and are disposed of, stored carbon is recycled to the environment. Since these products are not adding new carbon to the atmosphere, they are considered carbon-neutral compared to burning fossil fuel which adds new carbon to the atmosphere.

Landowners are encouraged to check with the Department of Natural Resources or County Extension Service to learn more about the developing carbon trading markets that support sustainable forest management and recognize the role forests can play in mitigating climate change.

#### DNR'S PLAN FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE

[www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/em\\_climateresilienceplan\\_feb2020.pdf?r5qt4w](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/em_climateresilienceplan_feb2020.pdf?r5qt4w)

## Why Sustainable Forestry?

You can have a positive impact on the forests of the future. Development and other pressures threaten the nation's forests. Implementing sustainable forest management practices on your land is a potential solution to combating this threat. Sustainable forest management can also protect and enhance the water quality, aesthetics, special sites and wildlife habitat on your land. Reforestation, one of the main objectives of sustainable forest management, ensures that your investment in forestland will create a valuable return in the future for you, your children and generations to come. Following laws, regulations and your state's BMPs for forestry is a critical component of implementing sustainable forestry practices. Using professional foresters, trained professional loggers, or becoming a Certified Tree Farmer can help you implement BMPs and reach your management objectives.

Sustainable forest management ensures forests for the future. It also helps to protect our forests, and in turn, our livelihood, wildlife, water quality and recreation. Managing your land for timber production and sustainable forestry go hand in hand. It is a business practice that is at the absolute core of managing for today and the future. Sustainable forestry management is the foundation and road map for a profitable forestry business.

## Leading by example

Perhaps most importantly, your dedication to sustainable forest management on your land promotes responsible forestry to others. With the world population expected to approach 10 billion by 2050, sustainable forestry is not just an ideal. It's a business, social and global obligation – and it's the right thing to do.



## Inconsistent Practices Investigation Procedures

A process that openly investigates concerns and official complaints is an important component of any legitimate certification program. The transparency requirements of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) 2022 Standard and supporting documents allow individuals and organizations to bring forward questions and concerns. Section 12 of the SFI® 2022 Standard describes the processes for addressing public inquiries and official complaints regarding inconsistent practices.

Washington SFI Implementation Committee  
Inconsistent Practices Investigation Procedures

## Notes

A series of ten horizontal orange bars, stacked vertically, intended for taking notes. Each bar is a solid, light orange color and spans most of the width of the page.



This guide is provided by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Washington State SFI Implementation Committee. For more information visit [www.wasfi.org](http://www.wasfi.org).

Sustainable Forestry Initiative® and SFI® are registered marks owned by Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. For more information visit [www.forests.org](http://www.forests.org).

PEFC is a registered trademark of the PEFC Council.

American Tree Farm System® is a registered trademark of the American Forest Foundation.

The Washington SIC has permission to use all images in this publication. Special thanks go to: Log deck image on page 6 copyright by Hampton Affiliates. Forwarder image on page 10 copyright by Evergreen Foundation. Elk image on page 13 copyright by Brad Reding.

Published June 2018  
Revised June 2022



Advancing Sustainable Forestry and Responsible Purchasing  
Globally Through Certification Standards and Certified Products