



SmartWood

Practical conservation through certified forestry

SmartWood Forest Management Annual Audit Report

Operation Name: Eastern Ontario Model Forest

Official Audit Year: 2005

SW-FM/COC-232

Report Written By/Auditor: Rob Keen, RPF

Final Editing: January 5, 2006

1. PUBLIC SUMMARY INFORMATION

Note to FMO: Section 1.0 will be attached to the public summary of the certified operation as an addendum and will be posted on the SmartWood website.

1.1. Audit Process

A. Audit year: 2005

B. Dates of Audit: June 28 and June 29, 2005 (report finalized Jan. 5 2006 by Rob Keen, reviewed by Jamal Kazi)

C. Audit Team: Rob Keen, B.Sc.F, RPF. is an forester with twenty five years of experience in forestry in Ontario. He has participated in four audits for SmartWood as well as Independent Forest Audits in Ontario using the provincial protocol.

D. Audit Overview: Preliminary discussions with EOMF about the audit procedure occurred two weeks prior to the field visit. During the afternoon of June 28, 2005, the auditor met with representatives from the EOMF to review the conditions of the previous year's audit. Late that same afternoon the auditor and EOMF representatives visited the Dolan property, an Eastern Ontario Certified Forest Owners Group participant (EOCFO).

Limerick Forest

On June 29, the auditor met with the Limerick Forest Advisory Committee to discuss their participation as a partner of the EOMF's FSC program. EOMF and LFAC reps made several presentations. Although the Limerick Forest had not yet been included in the EOMF's pool of FSC properties at the time of the audit, several locations on the Limerick forest were visited by the auditor, LFAC and EOMF representatives.

Background

The Limerick forest was managed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, on behalf on the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville from 1940 until 2001 when the MNR officially relinquished responsibility for this forest. Current management of the forest is overseen by the Limerick Forest Advisory Committee (LFAC). This committee was established to advise the County Council regarding the management of the Limerick Forest. LFAC is multi-stakeholder based providing balance to management decisions.

The Limerick Forest has a total production forest of 3,700 ha. A draft Forest Management Plan for the period of April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2009 has been prepared and is currently being reviewed by the LFAC.

The Limerick forest is primarily red pine plantation with a long-term objective of managing these forests to a natural condition. Annual harvest levels have been calculated using modest growth rates.

The sites visited included stands of past thinning activities as well as a block that had been marked and was ready for harvest.

After the Limerick site inspections, the auditor and EOMF reps met with representatives from South Nation Conservation. This group had recently been accepted under the EOMF's Resource Manager Certificate as a Forest Manager.

Sites Visited: The first property visited was the Dolan Property where an operation had begun two years ago and was still ongoing. The landowner was in no rush to have the operation completed and the operator was content to operate on the site over several years.

The owner is typical to the client group of EOMF, well educated, and not dependent on financial return from their forest. This is a group notably hesitant to allow inappropriate uses of their property. The EOMF had the central role in setting up and overseeing the tree marking, harvest and post harvest inspections. EOMF contracts a supervisor (Brian Clayton) on a day rate to meet the requirements of the EOMF system.

The various elements of the operation was reviewed at the site and compared with the operating procedures that EOMF has set up. Compartments where active operations have occurred recently were visited.

As well as the additions to the EOMF, the EOMF has also developed a MOU with South Nation Conservation and have included 10 sites into their FSC program. The South Nation Conservation have included two groups of properties for FSC certification under the EOMF Resource Manager certificate; namely South Nation Conservation (SNC) properties and the Stormount, Dundas and Glengarry County properties (SD&G).

SNC sites visited included SNC52. This site was a tolerant hardwood forest (12 ha) that had been marked, tallied, tendered and harvested during the winter of 2004/2005 by a local contractor Mike Maynard.

Of note within this stand was the presence of black ash. Black ash is an important First Nation value used for traditional art. Black ash seed trees were identified by certified seed collectors and protected from logging activities through careful logging practices. The location of the trees was passed on to the Forest Gene Conservation Association and included in their tree seed registry for future collection efforts.

The next site visited was one of the SD&G sites – SDG- 9&10. These sites consisted of Norway spruce, European larch, white pine and red pine and were marked and thinned in 2004. Trees on these sites exhibited excellent growth, especially the Norway spruce and as such also provided an excellent seed source with squirrel cone caches evident throughout the stand.

E. Personnel Interviewed:

The following people were consulted during this audit:

Person interviewed	Position/Organization
Brian Barkley	EOMF GM
Scott Davis	Forest Certification Coordinator
Tony Bull	EOMF owner
Mark Richardson	EOMF
Martha Copestake	EOMF
Mark Rowsell	EOMF
Ed Reynolds	Limerick Forest Manager
Geoff McVey	Limerick Forest – Resource Technician

Bob Gollinger	Limerick Forest Advisory Committee
Greg Knops	Limerick Forest Advisory Committee
Martin Streit	South Nation Conservation
Chris Craig	South Nation Conservation
Les Sheppard	United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Fred McFarland	Limerick Forest Advisory Committee
Jack Henry	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
Pat Pitz	South Nation Conservation
Mike Dolan	Woodlot owner

F. Documentation provided to auditor:

Management Plan (and MFTIP) for Dolan
 EOMF Report 49 Sept 2000 - Introduction to Sustainable Forestry Certification
 EOMF Report 51 Dec 2003 -- Policies and Procedures
 EOMF Report 55 July 2003 – Findings of the Afforestation Survey for Landowners in Eastern Ontario
 EOMF – Work Plan – 2005 - 2006
 Binder of Reports and Workshops Conducted by the EOMF, HCVF Report, Operations, MOU's etc.
 Certification Working Group -- Strategic Plan
 Updated list of landowners -- EOCFO
 New MOU for group
 Binder with minutes of Limerick Forest Advisory Committee meetings and the Limerick Forest - Long Range Management Plan

1.2 General Audit Findings and Conclusions

The following discussion is an overview of the issues and changes facing the EOMF currently. For further information about the EOMF program and circumstances, the main assessment and precondition audits should be consulted, as well as the EOMF website.

In the spring of 2005 the Domtar, Cornwall pulp mill was shut down temporarily for economic reasons. Domtar's local private land forestry operations ceased and several of its forestry staff were dismissed. Domtar had been an FSC Resource Manager with an FSC certified pool of 35 properties. To date there has been no decision as to the fate of Domtar's FSC properties. However, the local OMNR Stewardship Coordinator is investigating opportunities that may exist to pool these landowners into a group certification and include the pool under the EOMF's FSC program.

The Eastern Ontario Certified Forest Owners Group (EOCFO) membership has risen to 40 from last year's 30 and the group continues to be interested in active harvest operations. EOMF had originally set the group up to engage people with high expectations and a need to understand and have a degree of control over their woodlands.

All EOCFO members have MOUs with the Eastern Ontario Model Forest. One of the EOCFO Board members is also a member of EOMF Certification Working Group and acts as a liaison to both groups.

EOMF funding stability is always a concern in tough fiscal times. EOMF is in its third year of its five-year phase. EOMF maintains a vigorous programme of new initiatives, and certification is still a prominent part of that. It maintains an active intern programme. There has been no turnover among permanent staff. EOMF has an eye on stable funding for EOCFO, and has instituted an annual

membership fee. EOMF has non-profit charitable status which provides access to unique funding opportunities.

Communications is among EOMF's strengths. For example, EOMF maintains a certification website (<http://certification.eomf.on.ca/>) which has a record of all the minutes available from EOCFO. They share the policies document that is the central document of the certification program.

The EOMF is currently engaged in including the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville/Limerick Forest Advisory Committee under their FSC Resource Manager Certificate. As with other partners, a Memorandum of Understanding is being developed that will identify the term and conditions of this arrangement.

As noted previously, the EOMF has expanded its partnership to include South Nation Conservation who manages its own properties as well as the Stormount, Dundas and Glenmount properties. Marten Streit oversees the management of the South Nations FSC certified properties.

Since last year, the EOMF has expanded its FSC program to include forest groups that have their own manager, as is evident with the inclusion of the South Nation properties and the potential inclusion of the Limerick Forest. It is unlikely that the EOMF's Certification person (Scott Davis) will be able to continue to have as much direct contact with individual operations as is currently occurring with the EOCFOG. It is more likely that he will be in contact with the managers of the community forest programs.

It is therefore necessary that the EOMF and its partners develop a reporting system that will provide EOMF with assurances that their partner's programs are meeting the conditions of their Memorandum of Understanding and thereby ensure that the EOMF's FSC policies and procedures are being met (see CAR 01/05).

As well, the EOMF have been very active in addressing HCFVs as is evident from the workshops that they will be hosting and their involvement with the local First Nations. However, it is likely that they will be dealing with values that are extremely sensitive to human disturbance and they should therefore consider how they should track and map these values so that they are properly protected from unnecessary human disturbance (see CAR 02/05).

1.3 Status of Conditions and Corrective Action Requests (CARs)

A. Compliance Summary of Previously Issued Conditions and CARs

CAR 1 – 2004 - Closed

CAR 2 – 2004 - Closed

CAR 3 – 2004 - Closed

CAR 4 – 2004 - Closed

CAR 5 – 2004 - Closed

B. New CARs Issued in this Audit

CAR 1 – 2005: By the next annual audit, EOMF shall develop a system of assessment and reporting of its partners that are working under the umbrella of the EOMF's FSC certification to ensure that their partner's activities are consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the EOMF's Policies and Standard Operating Practices and the FSC Principles and Criteria.

CAR 2- 2005: By the next annual audit, EOMF shall develop a protocol for protecting sensitive values of known location (e.g. First Nation values, nest of rare birds, etc.) that may be compromised by having their location revealed.