



**Minnesota Counties
Sustainable Forest Management Certification Co-operative
Agreement**

1.1 Purpose and Scope

- 1.1.1 In order to work co-operatively towards third party certification of forest management practices, the Minnesota Counties of Beltrami, Carlton, Crow Wing, Clearwater and Koochiching, hereby agree as follows:
- a) To hereby associate as a County Certification Sustainable Forest Management Co-operative which can undertake joint initiatives to improve sustainable forest management and seek and maintain group certification.
 - b) To commit to and support policies as set forth in the Sustainable Forest Management Policy (LD-P1) and the Statement of Operational Commitments (LD-P2).

1.2 MEMBERSHIP

- 1.2.1 Membership to the Co-Operative is available to all counties in Minnesota who manage forest lands and who wish to participate and contribute to the work of the Co-Operative.
- 1.2.2 Counties may participate in the Co-Operative without being part of the group certification.
- 1.2.3 Only counties who participate in group certification can be part of the Certification Management Team.
- 1.2.4 Membership in the County Sustainable Forest Management Certification Cooperative is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time.
- 1.2.5 Any County withdrawing from the cooperative is responsible for all payments, or portions of payments associated with any contract (s) signed by their county board while the county was a member of the cooperative.
- 1.2.6 Any member County that does not comply with standards to maintain Certification will withdraw from the Group Certification program so as not to affect the Certification standards of other group participants. Those counties may still retain membership to the Co-operative as stated above.

1.3 COUNTY CERTIFICATION MANAGEMENT TEAM

- 1.3.1 The County Certification Management Team is comprised of the Land Commissioners of all the Counties that have agreed in writing to participate in the group certification.
- 1.3.2 The County Certification Management Team is responsible for the following:
- a) Maintaining of the County Sustainable Forest Management System (SFMS) and conducting management reviews of the SFMS;
 - b) Administering the joint third party certification process on behalf of the members;
 - c) Ensuring member compliance with SFMS policies and standards;



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- d) Developing and administering the internal and external audit program;
- e) Appointing members to serve in the following roles:
 - Lead Certification Representative;
 - Sustainable Implementation Committee (SIC) Representative

1.4 MEETINGS

- 1.4.1 General meetings of the Co-Operative will be held semi-annually.
- 1.4.2 The County Certification Management Team will meet at least semi-annually.

1.5 INVOICING

- 1.5.1 Each member of the cooperative will be invoiced individually for their particular portion of the Certification and Surveillance Audits.
- 1.5.2 Costs for all Certification and Surveillance Audits will be divided equally between all Cooperative members participating in Group Certification.
- 1.5.3 Each County will pay the respective share of the invoice directly to the Auditing Firm.

1.6 COUNTY & LAND COMMISSIONER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.6.1 Each Land Commissioner represented on the County Certification Management Team will serve as project supervisor for all contract services conducted within his/her county and is responsible for approving payment for such services.
- 1.6.2 Each County included in the contract for services is responsible for payment of all services provide with its jurisdiction.

THE UNDERSIGNED AGREES TO BE BOUND BY THE TERMS OF THIS AGREEMENT:

Organization: CARLTON COUNTY
 By: MILLO C. RASMUSSEN
 Its: LAND COMMISSIONER
 Signature: Milto C. Rasmussen
 Date: 3-5-07