Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Implementation Committee (SIC)

Program Update

SIC Update

The Pennsylvania SFI Implementation Committee (SIC) is made up of many knowledgeable and dedicated individuals who, in addition to their regular day-to-day duties, make the commitment to show up to meetings, support and guide the program, and contribute their valuable input.

Leadership of the SIC is provided by our Chair and Vice-Chair and December 31st marked the end of Todd Spark’s term as Chair of the Pennsylvania SIC. At our quarterly meeting in December, Todd was presented with an engraved clock on behalf of the SIC in appreciation of his service during 2017-2018. Todd will continue his long time involvement with the program as a member of the SIC. Mark McCall of Domtar Corporation assumed the Chair position at the beginning of the year and will serve for 2019-2020. Jason Wenrich, with FORECON Inc but representing Forest Investment Associates on the SIC, was elected as Vice-Chair.

SFI Inc. Update

The SFI Program’s work is based on four pillars—standards, conservation, education and community. SFI standards certified more than 305 million acres across the United States and Canada at the end of 2018, and tens of millions more are being positively influenced by SFI’s unique fiber sourcing standards. SFI accounts for almost 25% of global certified forests and nearly 40% of PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) certifications worldwide. Products certified to SFI standards are sold in nearly 140 countries and 25% of all Fortune 100 companies use the SFI label (an increase from 21% in 2017).

Starting in 2019 SFI will begin the process of reviewing its standards, with a new SFI standard set to be released on January 1, 2022. Last year SFI introduced the SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module to create additional certification options for small landowners. SFI announced earlier this year that it would be engaging with the American Forest Foundation to grow opportunities for small landowners to certify their forestlands under the American Tree Farm System.

Since 1995, SFI Program Participants have directly invested nearly $1.6 billion in forest research, with more than 75% of these investments being allocated to conservation-related objectives. SFI’s Conservation Impact Project aims to quantify the conservation benefits of SFI’s work, and the connection between well-managed forests, sustainable supply chains, and important conservation outcomes.

As the national sponsor, SFI is working to position Project Learning Tree (PLT) to be the global leader in environmental education for sustainable forests and a sustainable planet.

SFI works to contribute to the quality of life of communities and help increase their understanding of sustainably managed forests through its unique grassroots network of 34 provincial, state, and regional SFI Implementation Committees. The work of the SICs is as diverse as the communities they work in and with, but outreach and logger training are two core priorities. Since 1995, more than 192,384 resource and harvesting professionals across North America have participated in training to understand environmental of water quality, biodiversity, and other sustainable practice requirements. Since 2008, SFI has partnered with Habitat for Humanity and donated countless volunteer hours and certified building products to more than a dozen homes across the United States and Canada.

Questions or comments regarding the PA SIC newsletter or to unsubscribe, contact: Pennsylvania SFI® Implementation Committee Chuck Coup, Program Manager 211 Barrington Lane Bellefonte, PA 16823 (814) 355-1010 or (888) 734-9366 (toll free) Fax: (814) 355-1022 pasfi@sfiofpa.org / www.sfiofpa.org
Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) Program

SFI (www.sfiprogram.org) is a solutions-oriented sustainability organization that collaborates on forest-based conservation and community initiatives that demonstrate and enhance our shared quality of life while providing supply chain assurances through standards, data, and authentic stories.

SFI is the largest single forest certification standard in the world, with more than 300 million acres certified. At the heart of the SFI Program are SFI Implementation Committees (SICs). The Pennsylvania SIC is one of 34 spread across North America that responds to local needs and issues through the SFI Program at the local level. This grassroots network is unique to the SFI Program.

Since 1995, the Pennsylvania SIC’s active presence on the ground has resulted in significant contributions to individual communities through activities such as training loggers and sponsoring outreach to landowners and the public on responsible forest management.

Learn more at www.sfiofpa.org

SFI® Program Participants Supporting the PA SIC

These companies participate in the SFI® Program and are certified to be in conformance with the SFI Standard. They provide direct involvement and financial support to the Pennsylvania SFI® Implementation Committee (SIC).

Domtar Paper Co., LLC
Forest Investment Associates
Georgia-Pacific, LLC
GreenWood Resources, Inc.
Hancock Forest Management
Pixelle Specialty Solutions
Verso Corporation
Weaber, Inc.
Weyerhaeuser Co.

Game Commission Board Approves Additional Protection for 3 Cave Bat Species

(From PA Environment Digest)

On January 29, the state Board of Game Commissioners gave final approval to a measure that updates the state’s list of threatened and endangered species, providing three cave bat species additional protection by reclassifying them as state endangered species.

The update also upgrades the peregrine falcon’s status from endangered to threatened; upgrades the piping plover from extirpated to endangered, and lists the red knot – a federally threatened species – as a threatened species within Pennsylvania, as well.

The three cave bat species that have been given additional protection are the northern long-eared bat, tri-colored and little brown bat, all of which have been decimated by white-nose syndrome since it appeared in Pennsylvania in 2008.

The northern long-eared bat was listed as a federal threatened species in April 2015. In addition, tri-colored bats and little brown bats currently are being considered for protection under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

Written public comments on the measure were accepted through December. Of the 33 comments submitted, none opposed any of the listings.

These listings historically have ensured the Game Commission and other resource agencies work with industry if projects could be affected by the presence of endangered or threatened species.

All projects are screened for potential conflicts through a state environmental review, which has been in place since the early 1980s and now is called the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI).

PNDI was established to provide current, reliable, objective information to help inform environmental decisions and guide conservation work and land-use planning. Resource agencies continually update PNDI’s species records to ensure the best guidance and conservation possible.

Northern long-eared bats currently are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. If they become state listed, the Game Commission will continue to defer comments on potential impacts to northern long-eared bats to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. No additional coordination with the Game Commission will occur.

Since tri-colored and little brown bats currently are not federally listed, projects within 300 meters of known summer roost locations and winter hibernacula used by these bats will require Game Commission consultation.

“Sites that held these bats prior to the arrival of white-nose syndrome, but not since, won’t affect projects,” said Dan Brauning, Wildlife Diversity Division supervisor. “That distinction alone immediately reduces the potential for conflicts when you consider bats have lost upward of 97 percent of their historic populations in Pennsylvania.”

For perspective, there are about 30 hibernacula and 120 maternity sites known to support little brown and tri-colored bats that will be added to PNDI as a result of the state-endangered listing.

Prior to white nose syndrome appearing in 2008 in Pennsylvania, there were about 250 bat hibernacula and 300 maternity sites listed in PNDI, according to Greg Turner, Game Commission Endangered and Nongame Mammals Section supervisor.

What works against these cave bats is their annual reproduction provides limited replacement. Most female cave bats have one pup per year, a rate that would place their potential recovery more than a century away.

But some of the proposals for status change represent better news.

The peregrine falcon has seen a steady statewide recovery, which qualifies its status to be upgraded to threatened under the agency’s Peregrine Falcon Management Plan. This upgrade would keep PNDI screening and Game Commission coordination at status quo.

Upgrading the piping plover’s status to endangered recognizes its return to breeding in Pennsylvania. After more than 60 years of absence, piping plover pairs successfully nested at Presque Isle State Park in 2017 and 2018.

And changing the status of the red knot – a rare migrant bird found in Pennsylvania mostly at Presque Isle State Park – recognizes its vulnerability to further declines.

Both piping plovers and red knots currently are federally listed.

For more information, visit the Game Commission’s Threatened & Endangered Species webpage.

www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/EndangeredandThreatened
New DEP e-Permits For Stream Crossings

Last fall, DEP launched an electronic permit (e-permit) system to provide applicants a more efficient way to request permit registrations for new projects that affect wetlands and waterways and get a faster response from DEP.

The new system is for Chapter 105 Wetland and Waterway Obstruction and Encroachment General Permits. A variety of projects are covered under these general permits, but the two most commonly used in timber harvesting operations are for permitting stream crossings: the GP-7 (Minor Road Crossings) and GP-8 (Temporary Road Crossing).

The Chapter 105 e-permit is accessed through DEP GreenPort (www.depgreenport.state.pa.us) and self-registration is required for first-time users. Once an account is created, the user will receive an email with directions to fill out and submit an Electronic Filing Administrator (EFA) Registration and Security Agreement for e-permitting. After submitting the agreement, the user will receive an email with directions to complete registration in GreenPort. A user may begin submitting Chapter 105 General Permit registration/applications through the e-permitting application system once they receive confirmation that their account verification is complete.

DEP hopes that this new system will save time for applicants and department reviewers, simplify permit payments, reduce the expense of printing complex design drawings, and make information available in real-time to the public, for increased transparency. DEP is encouraging applicants to use the Chapter 105 e-permit and provide the agency with feedback on it. Applicants are encouraged to send comments and suggestions on the e-permit to a dedicated email account: ra-epbwedere wet105@pa.gov. All messages will be reviewed and considered for future improvements.

To the best of our knowledge, DEP has not specifically stated if/when paper applications will no longer be accepted. At this time, all County Conservation Districts (with delegated responsibility) and DEP regional offices are still accepting paper applications to accommodate applicants whose only option is a paper form. DEP has stated that “the paper registration will remain an option until we’re confident the online application is usable and reasonably accessible to the regulated community.”

For more information, please visit DEP’s Chapter 105 e-permitting website:

www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/Waterways/Pages/ePermitting.aspx

‘Cell Phone Distractions’: Washington State SHARP Program issues hazard brief for logging industry

As “technology-induced distracted driving” continues to claim an ever increasing number of lives each year on our roadways, experts are starting to raise awareness of the potential safety impacts that cell phone distraction can have on logging operations.

Recently, the Washington state Safety & Health Assessment & Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program has released a Hazard Brief warning logging industry employers and workers of the dangers of cellphone-related distractions.

SHARP, a Washington State Department of Labor & Industries research program, highlights three cellphone distractions that make logging work “even more dangerous”:

- **Looking at a cellphone could result in a hazardous situation not being recognized “until it’s too late.”** Workers are encouraged to keep their eyes on the load of logs, also known as the turn, at all times.
- **Playing loud music on a cellphone can make radio communications difficult, and may prevent workers from hearing warning whistles or signals.**
- **The presence of a cellphone can divide a worker’s attention.** Cellphones should be stowed away when operating equipment.

Logging workers had the highest fatal injury rate in the nation in 2015 – 132.7 fatal injuries per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

Loggers in Pennsylvania should take time to consider what affect cell phone usage could have on the safety of their operations.

SHARP recommends that employers create company policies to reduce the risks of cellphone distractions. Policies should clearly state if, when and how cellphones may be used on the jobsite (e.g., only in case of an emergency).

To review the full Hazard Brief:

PA SFI Professional Timber Harvester Training Program

The Pennsylvania SFI Professional Timber Harvester Training Program is geared toward commercial timber harvesters; however, it is open to any individual interested in participating. Courses are offered in the spring (mid-March through mid-May) and the fall (mid-September through mid-November) at locations across Pennsylvania each year.

Learn more:  
www.sfiofpa.org/requirements

Register for classes:  
www.sfiofpa.org/register

Find SFI Qualified Logging Professionals or review your training records:  
www.sfiofpa.org/search

2019 Timber Show

Pennsylvania's Forest Products Equipment and Technology Exposition

June 7-8, 2019

The 2019 Timber Show will be held at Penn State's Ag Progress Days site at Rock Springs, Pa., nine miles southwest of State College on Pa. Route 45. Centrally located and easily accessible, the 55 acres of exhibition grounds will include indoor and outdoor exhibits, with on-site and “in-the-woods” demonstrations of state-of-the-art timber harvesting machinery. Free admission and parking.

http://agsci.psu.edu/timber

This year’s program will again feature the Game of Logging national Finals Competition and demonstrations by the Penn State Woods Team. There will also be a Log a Load for Kids Charity Truck Parade.

The Pennsylvania SIC will again be offering a 4-hour continuing education course on that Friday (June 7th) at the event. Attendees can participate for 1 year of CE credit. The course will address Pennsylvania wildlife species of greatest conservation concerns. Causes for population declines and restoration efforts for several species will be highlighted.

It is free to attend the course (public welcome), however a $20 administrative fee will be required for those wishing to receive SFI continuing education credits. Walk-ups will be accepted, but preregistration is encouraged to ensure adequate seating and handouts. Register on the PA SFI website or with the enclosed form.
CORE TRAINING

Individuals must complete Professional Timber Harvesting Essentials, Game of Logging - Level 1, and provide proof of current First Aid & CPR certification within a 2-year period to receive a PA SFI® Professional Timber Harvester Training Card. Refer to the Training Program Policy for complete details on training requirements at: www.sfiofp.org/requirements.

- Basic First Aid & Adult CPR does NOT qualify for continuing education credit.
- Professional Timber Harvesting Essentials and/or Game of Logging - Level 1 can be taken for CE Credit. If you have not already completed the training in the last 5 years.

continuing education training

One (1) year of CE credit is given for each four (4) hours of training completed. Refer to the Training Program Policy for complete details on training requirements at: www.sfiofp.org/requirements.

other continuing education training

Additional training opportunities are available through numerous organizations across Pennsylvania and adjoining states. Training courses taken from other sources may qualify for PA SFI core or continuing education credit, provided the subject of the course is relevant to the SFI program, and if legitimate form of documentation is provided to the PA SIC for proof of content and attendance. Outside credits are subject to all Pennsylvania SFI Professional Timber Harvester Training Program Policy requirements. To submit Non-PA SFI training credits please fill out a copy of the Non-PA SFI Course Credit Form (available on our website under "Forms" section or by contacting the PA SIC office) and send it to the PA SIC office with all necessary paperwork and a check for $20 made payable to the “PA SFI Implementation Committee” for administrative costs. Refer to the Training Program Policy for complete details on training requirements.

The PA SIC maintains a listing of all pre-approved Non-PA SFI CE training courses that we have been made aware of. It can be found on our website: http://sfiofp.blogspot.com

Visit www.sfiofp.org/register for additional details and the most current training schedule. Programs may be added or cancelled at any time.

For additional information, please contact the PA SIC Implementation Committee at: (814) 230-2866, or mark@sfiofp.org

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Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative®
Implementation Committee
Professional Timber Harvester Training Program
2019 Spring Course Registration Form

SAVE TIME, REGISTER ONLINE AT: www.sfiofpa/register

- Registration fees are non-refundable and non-transferable after the course registration deadline if the course is held and you do not attend.
- Registration is on a first come, first served basis. Your space in a course will not be reserved until the registration fee is paid. Please do not delay in making payment or your space could be given to another participant.
- Courses may be cancelled if a minimum number of students are not registered by the registration deadline. Please register on time.
- For a full description of the Training Program Policies, please visit www.sfiofpa.org or contact the PA SIC® office.

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2019 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

CORE TRAINING:
Required to receive a PA SFI® Professional Timber Harvester Training Card. All 3 requirements must be completed (in any order) within 2 years.

- Professional Timber Harvesting Essentials (8 hours) - Covers general safety considerations, chainsaw safety, logging equipment safety (harvesters, loaders, skidders, etc.), trucking safety and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standards that apply to timber harvesting and related activities. Also covers pertinent aspects of Pennsylvania’s Clean Streams laws and other water resource protection regulations. Best Management Practices (BMPs), hazardous material control, and logging aesthetics. If you have not taken Professional Timber Harvesting Essentials within the last five (5) years, you can attend the class for continuing education credit.
- Game of Logging – Level 1 (8 hours) - Focuses on introducing the participant to the “open face” felling technique and the development of skills to safely use it. Topics covered include personal protective equipment, chainsaw safety features, chainsaw reactive forces, bore cutting, pre-planning the fell, and understanding hinge wood strength. Participants need safety equipment (hard hat, chaps, eye protection, ear protection, and sturdy boots), water, lunch, and should be prepared to spend the day outside (rain or shine). Participants are not required to provide their own chainsaw. If you have not taken Game of Logging – Level 1 within the last five (5) years, you can attend GOL-1 for continuing education credit.
- First Aid & CPR (4 hours) - Because timber harvesting is a hazardous occupation, OSHA regulations require that everyone who works in the woods maintain current First Aid & CPR training from a provider who can issue a certificate or a card as documentation of hands on training (i.e. no online certifications will be accepted). Individuals do not need to complete this training through the PA SFI Professional Timber Harvester Training Program, however, they must provide proof of First Aid & CPR certification to receive their initial training card (we cannot accept the MSHA 5000-23 form as satisfaction of this requirement). DOES NOT COUNT FOR CE CREDIT
- Boundary Lines, Maps & Deeds (4 hours) - This course covers the fundamentals of researching deeds, locating and marking boundary lines on the ground using a map and compass and GPS technology, and how to make maps using conventional paper methods, freeware such as Google Earth, and other mapping software. This training involves both classroom and field exercises.
- Erosion Control in Our Forests (8 hours) - This workshop combines indoor and outdoor instruction time to discuss Pennsylvania’s environmental regulatory requirements (chapters 93, 102, & 105 of PA Code). It discusses planning before the harvest, stream crossings, best management practices, reading E&S plans, and other considerations during and after the timber harvest.
- Game of Logging (8 hours, each Level) - These courses cover chainsaw safety and safe/efficient harvesting techniques. MUST be taken in order. Level 1 (see description under Core Training section). Level 2 focuses on saw maintenance, chain sharpening techniques, releasing spring poles safely, and directional tree felling. Level 3 focuses on handling difficult trees. Topics covered include limbing, wedging techniques and hinge placement. This training is conducted in the field.
- Hydraulic Systems Safety & Maintenance (8 hours) - This hands-on course will introduce participants to the theory of hydraulic operation, nomenclature and function of associated components, safety practices, general maintenance, and diagnostic troubleshooting of hydraulic systems.
- Valuing Standing Timber (8 hours) - How do you estimate the volume and value of timber being sold on a given forest tract? This workshop teaches the methods by which reasonably estimable volumes of timber volumes and values can be obtained. The tools and correct estimation methods will be covered. The workshop will show how to tally trees and create usable summaries of species, volume, and value. Involves both classroom and hands-on field exercises.
- Wildlife – Young Forest Initiative (4 hours) - Developed through a cooperative program with the Wildlife Management Institute, this course discusses the importance of creating early successional forest conditions for the benefit of multiple wildlife species. Participants will learn and be given tools to identify and create habitat systems for the American Woodcock, Golden Winged Warbler, and other young forest dependent wildlife species important to forest landowners.

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