

Interested in local participation?

Forest Companies and Government Agencies in the Okanagan and Nicola Thompson Fraser areas of the BC interior have elected to become certified under the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) – Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) certification program.

Central to the achievement of “Certified” status is the active solicitation and consideration of input from a representative cross-section of individuals having an interest in local forests and how they are managed. Participation would involve attending 2 to 3 meeting per year related to the monitoring, implementation and continual improvement of performance relative to Sustainable Forest Management.

Participants may or may not formally represent a group or organization. Typical participants include, Ranchers, Trappers, Hiking and Outdoor clubs, Snowmobile Clubs, Civic and Regional resource purveyors, Environmental and Conservation Organizations, Education groups, and just plain folk.

If you are interested in participating in either the Nicola Thompson Fraser or Okanagan Public Advisory Group, please go to the “Contact us” tab and contact the facilitator via the e-mail link.



Did you know:

Canada has nearly 400 million hectares of forest – which is 10% of the world's forests.



93% of Canada's forests are publicly owned



The CSA forest certification standard is Canada's official national standard for sustainable forest management (SFM)

Forest Certification Provides Consumer Confidence

Buyers of wood and paper products in Canada's key export markets are increasingly concerned about sustainability issues including illegal logging which is a serious problem in some parts of the world.

Ninety per cent of the world's forests, many of them in jurisdictions without effective laws, are not certified. So certification is part of a commitment to provide customers proof of legality and sustainability. It provides independent (and therefore trusted) verification that widely accepted and evolving environmental, social and economic standards are being followed in the forest. The certificate that gets issued means that accredited auditors with the necessary expertise have examined a forest company's activities against a plethora of requirements that range from maintaining bio diversity to respecting Aboriginal rights.

Customers then only need to concern themselves with one question.
Are you certified?

Forests certified to the CSA SFM Standard, Canada's national standard for sustainable forest management, meet a strict set of biological, environmental and social criteria. Because 93% of Canada's forests are publicly owned, the CSA certification also demands active public involvement by local residents. No other forest certification standard in the world requires the level of public engagement of the public as that is found in the CSA standard. From coast to coast, local public advisory groups are involved in frequent discussions each and every year with forest managers to continuously improve their performance.

The Canadian Council of Forest Ministers recognize the CSA SFM Standard as being consistent with national and international agreements related to sustainable forest management. They confirm it meets criteria for balancing interests, being objective and science-based, implementable and practical. Similarly, the UK government, in one of the most rigorous certification evaluations ever done, has repeatedly found that CSA and the Program for Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) global program under which it falls, provide assurance of legal and sustainable forest management practices. As Canada's national standard, more forests are certified to the CSA SFM standard than any other national standard in the world.

Did you know:

40% of the world's certified forests are in Canada



There are more forests in Canada certified to the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standard than any other certification standard (over 62 million hectares certified to CSA as of December, 2010).



The CSA SFM standard requires that organizations:

- Openly seek and invite participation from a broad range of interested parties, making special efforts to encourage the participation of Aboriginal communities.
- Develop and maintain clearly defined operating rules for the public participation process.
- Work with the group to identify and select values, objectives, indicators and targets, develop and select strategies and monitor results

Local advisory groups may also have other roles as decided by the organization seeking certification and the advisory group. In the end, the advisory group will assist in the development of a Sustainable Forest Management Plan for the local forest area. This plan will contain performance measures for key biological and social indicators such as soil conservation, native species diversity and local community sustainability. Advisory group members are citizens that generally have an interest in how public forests in their local area are being managed.

In order to fulfill the roles of the public advisory groups mentioned above, members will meet voluntarily at their convenience during the year. The frequency of meetings can range from 1 to 2 per year to once per month depending on the preferences of the local participants. Field trips are often provided as a way of getting a better understanding of specific elements of sustainable forest management.

Lend your voice, experiences and local area knowledge to the existing members of an advisory group. The interactive certification map located at <http://www.certificationcanada.org/maps/> will show any forests certified to the CSA standard in your local area, and the forest company(s) that can be contacted for more information. Advisory group meetings are often organized and lead by a facilitator who can provide you with more information on the public participation process and any upcoming meetings.

