

# Pro Tips for Members of NNRG's FSC Group Certificate

*An Overview of FSC Member Responsibilities & Resources for observing FSC guidance*

*Updated November 2017*

Our members are as productive as their forests and often have a lot going on. Northwest Natural Resource Group strives to help keep the management of your Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) group certificate efficient – but comprehensive. While streamlined, we are ready to delve into the details of honoring and adhering to the FSC principles and standards when needed. These “pro tips” are a reminder of some of the basic responsibilities for maintaining FSC certification and the most frequently asked questions, it goes over:

- Annual reporting
- Reporting harvest and chemical use
- Prohibited chemicals
- Maintaining your forest management plan
- Monitoring your forest
- FSC logo use
- Selling FSC-certified material
- Local FSC wood products businesses
- The 10 FSC principles
- FSC standards for family forests and owners harvesting >2,000 mbf/year in the Pacific Northwest
- Annual FSC renewal questions

***If you have questions about the program or stewardship questions, talk to Kirk Hanson ([kirk@nnrg.org](mailto:kirk@nnrg.org), 360-316-9317) or Lindsay Malone ([lindsay@nnrg.org](mailto:lindsay@nnrg.org), 206-971-8966). For a more comprehensive review of the Northwest Certified Forestry (NCF) policies, roles, and administration of the FSC group certificate refer to your NCF Membership Manual.***

## Annual reporting - on a yearly basis you need to:

1. **Check-in with Lindsay Malone, Director of Member Services ([lindsay@nnrg.org](mailto:lindsay@nnrg.org), 206-971-8966), for your annual renewal.** The annual renewal covers a range of questions (see last page of this handout). Some renewals can happen by email. Most require a 20-60 minute phone call. If there has been significant management activity on your land (harvest >5,000 board feet, new roads or culverts, etc.) – we'll arrange to do a site visit to verify that practices are consistent with FSC standards.
2. **Report your annual timber harvest volume and herbicide records** - if applicable - to [lindsay@nnrg.org](mailto:lindsay@nnrg.org) at the end of the third financial quarter of the year (Sept. 30). Preferably by Oct. 15 so that this information can be collated into the annual report prepared for the FSC audit that occurs between October and December each year.
3. **Pay your annual membership dues within a month of receiving the invoice.** Doing so in a timely manner helps keep program administration costs down and certification rates at their current level.

## Reporting harvest and chemical use

Harvest volume and chemical use information is collected annually. NNRG has put together an Excel workbook, *Annual FSC Reporting Workbook* with sheets that may be helpful to you if you are looking for a format to document chemical use and harvest volumes. Contact Lindsay ([lindsay@nnrg.org](mailto:lindsay@nnrg.org), 206-971-8966) to get the latest version.

NNRG will happily accept your chemical use report and harvest report in whatever format you provide, so long as we get the information during your annual renewal check-in or in advance of the group certificate audit - preferably by October 15 of each year.

## Prohibited chemicals

In October 2017, FSC updated the list of highly hazardous pesticides. Please consult the [FSC Pesticides website](#) and [list of FSC Highly Hazardous Pesticides](#) before you use chemicals on your property.

*How can you tell if the herbicide contains one of the banned formulations?*

### Step 1: Read the herbicide label.

*For example:*

**Simply Dead Herbicide**  
For control of woody species and to prevent resprouting.  
**ACTIVE INGREDIENTS:**  
Picloram 5.5%  
Dimethylamine salt of 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid 20.5%  
**OTHER INGREDIENTS** 74.0%  
**TOTAL** 100.0%

*Figure 1: This sample herbicide label ingredient list contains both picloram and 2,4-D. You will need to investigate further. This "Simply Dead Herbicide" example is gleaned from Indiana's Green Certification Program.*

**Step 2: Check the CAS (Chemical Abstracts Service) number on the herbicide's Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).** You can find MSDS online by searching the herbicide name and "MSDS." In the Composition/Information on Ingredients section of the MSDS, it will list the chemical and its CAS#. The CAS# you are looking for are 2,4-D (CAS# 94-75-7) and picloram (CAS # 1918-02-1). **If the CAS numbers match, don't use the herbicide. It's banned.**

*For example:*

**Simply Dead Herbicide**  
**PRODUCT AND COMPANY IDENTIFICATION**  
**Product:** Simply Dead Herbicide  
**Company Identification:** Stump Chemical, LLC 123 Dead Tree Lane Nowhere, IN 47654  
**COMPOSITION:**  
Picloram CAS# 006753-47-5 5.5%  
Dimethylamine salt CAS# 000094-75-7 20.5%  
of 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid Balance, Total including: 74.0%  
Ethylene glycol

*Figure 2: Should you use this chemical? No. The CAS# for the 2,4-D matches the banned 2,4-D formulation.*

Here are a few well-known chemicals and brand names that **ARE PROHIBITED**. FSC's concern about these chemicals is that they do not breakdown quickly and therefore can infiltrate groundwater or are toxic to wildlife, fish, and insects:

- Atrazine (active ingredient: atrazine) – [Material Safety Data Sheet \(MSDS\)](#)
- Warrior (active ingredient: lambda-cyhalothrin) – [MSDS](#)

Need help figuring out if your herbicide contains a banned chemical? Talk to Lindsay ([lindsay@nnrg.org](mailto:lindsay@nnrg.org), 206-971-8966).

### A reminder when it comes to chemicals:

FSC encourages forest management that employs the use of silvicultural systems, integrated pest management, and strategies for controlling pests or invasive species that minimize the need for the use of chemicals. It's important to keep in mind:

- Chemicals should only be used where less environmentally hazardous techniques have been shown through research or empirical experience to be ineffective.
- Chemicals can be used when it has been deemed necessary to control invasive weed species that have the potential to alter forest habitat function and in some cases where invasive or native species are aggressively encroaching on active forest roads.
- When chemicals are applied, the least environmentally hazardous option will be used to minimize effects on non-target organisms or ecological systems.
- The applicator applying the chemicals is trained and will follow all applicable safety precautions.
- Chemicals will be stored and disposed of in a safe and environmentally appropriate manner.
- The forest manager actively monitors chemical application sites not only to determine effectiveness but also to check for residue damage or unintended consequences.
- If you do use chemicals, keep a record of the chemical, volume used (concentrate and diluted), dates of application, target species, application method, and monitor effectiveness.

These common products are NOT prohibited and may be used on FSC-certified forests according to the above guidelines:

- Accord (active ingredient: glyphosate) – more info on the [Material Safety Data Sheet](#) (MSDS)
- Arsenal (active ingredient: imazapyr) – more info on the [Material Safety Data Sheet](#) (MSDS)
- Garlon (active ingredient: triclopyr) – more info on the [Material Safety Data Sheet](#) (MSDS)
- Roundup (active ingredient: glyphosate) – [go here for specific Roundup MSDS's](#)

## Maintaining your forest management plan

How you steward your land on the ground is of utmost importance. To uphold the FSC standards your forest and your management plan should be a reflection of one another - adapt as necessary.

While ten years is not very long in the life of most trees, a lot can happen in 10 years! Thus, FSC requires that forest management plans be updated every 10 years. You can also update your plan on a more frequent basis.

Sometimes updating a management plan will require hiring a forester, but you can also update your plan yourself. There are a number of management plan resources available to guide you through the process – a starting point is the [NNRG's Resources](#) page on our website.

### A few other reminders about management plans:

- FSC considers your forest management plan to be the nerve center of an FSC-certified operation. Whether 5 acres or 100,000 acres, all members must have a forest management plan that is appropriate to the scale and intensity of their forest management.
- Members are required to abide by the actions recorded in the management plan. If circumstances change, adapt the plan to the management activities (so long as they are consistent with FSC standards).
- Members should update management plans following major natural disturbances or changes to management objectives and provide an up-to-date copy to NNRG.
- Public lands resource managers are required to make their management plans and information publicly available.

## Monitoring your forest

Monitoring is a critical component of good forest stewardship and is a means to evaluate the ecosystem services that a forest produces. The extent of your monitoring system will depend on the scale and intensity of your forest management.

Monitoring as an opportunity to practice observing your forest carefully, to help you better know your land, to inform management decisions. It can also be a lot of fun! The benefits of monitoring including helping you remember which year the storm hit, how often you see sign of a bobcat, how long a habitat pile lasts, recall when you planted those trees, when you harvested, and to understand if your investment of time and resources contributed to changes in the forest.

For family forest owners, the monitoring format does not need to be complicated. Pick a system that is easy for you to use and that works for your family or community. This could be a spiral notebook, a spreadsheet, a file of photos with some annotations, an annual summary or report that you share with your community. What's a medium that is most likely to be useful to you? Use it!

A basic monitoring program will document the following forest management attributes:

1. Yield of all forest products harvested.
2. Growth rates, regeneration and condition of the forest.
3. Composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna.
4. Environmental impacts of harvesting and other operations.
5. Costs, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.

Additional qualitative forest monitoring should be conducted during regular walks through the forest. Collect field notes and periodically add them as an appendix to your forest management plan.

The following attributes should be monitored, at a minimum, via observations:

1. Growth of newly planted seedlings.
2. Presence of invasive species, including forest access and haul roads and along margins of forest.
3. Fish and wildlife presence.
4. Snag and downed log recruitment.
5. Photo points count as monitoring too!

*Note: NCF has published a comprehensive guide to conducting a forest inventory and monitoring that contains step-by-step instructions on how to set up permanent plots and collect field data. You can find materials on the NNRG website at: <http://nnrg.org/resources/monitoring-and-inventory-tools/>, or contact Lindsay ([lindsay@nnrg.org](mailto:lindsay@nnrg.org), 206-971-8966).*

## FSC® logo use

If you are planning to use the FSC logo, the FSC acronym, or Forest Stewardship Council® on any marketing materials, brochures, websites, etc. – Please contact Lindsay ([lindsay@nnrg.org](mailto:lindsay@nnrg.org), 206-971-8966) to request a review of your use of the FSC logo. **NNRG must obtain approval from the Soil Association for all uses of the FSC logo.** Typically, the review and approval process takes just a few days.

Go here to see how to use the FSC logo: [FSC Logo Use Help Sheet](#)

## Selling FSC-certified material

For those of you who are selling certified forest products please ensure that all load tickets, invoices, bills of lading, etc., contain the following:

- Your FSC Chain of Custody code.
- The FSC Claim: Write 'FSC 100%' on each load ticket.
- If the buyer requires verification of your FSC certification NNRG can provide a copy of your FSC COC certificate – your certification can also be verified on FSC's public certificate search page: <http://info.fsc.org/certificate.php>

Important: Please retain copies of all documentation from any logs sold as FSC-certified. If your property is selected for an FSC audit, you will be asked to provide these materials to verify compliance with Chain of Custody requirements. If you have questions, ask Lindsay ([lindsay@nnrg.org](mailto:lindsay@nnrg.org), 206-971-8966).

Here's an example of what a FSC compliant load ticket might look like:

**LOAD RECEIPT**  
**No. 503-360**

Logger's Logo

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ INITIAL: \_\_\_\_\_

TIMBER OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_

SALE NAME/  
LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

LOGGER: \_\_\_\_\_

TRUCKER: \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIES: \_\_\_\_\_ NO. OF LOGS: \_\_\_\_\_

DELIVER TO: \_\_\_\_\_

FSC claim of FSC 100%

**FSC 100%**

**SA-FM/COC-001394XX**

The FSC chain of custody number and your 2 or 3 digit code goes here!

## Local FSC-certified wood products businesses

If you are preparing for a timber sale or are looking to market specific materials, consider collaborating with local FSC-certified manufacturers and other wood products businesses. Our partner organization, [Sustainable Northwest](#), manages a group certificate for mills, woodworkers, manufacturers, and other businesses that incorporate FSC-certified wood into their products. Some of our NCF members have collaborated with these businesses to create and sell [beautiful products](#). Here is a list of [local and regional businesses that are FSC-certified through Sustainable Northwest](#).

When NNRG receives inquiries from wood products buyers about available FSC materials. We immediately notify our FSC-certified members that can supply these materials about these inquiries. To make sure we have your most current contact information, check with Lindsay ([lindsay@nnrg.org](mailto:lindsay@nnrg.org), 206-971-8966).

## The 10 FSC principles

These are the ten rules for responsible forest management and the basis for the indicators and guidance set forth in the FSC standards. During the annual FSC audit, NNRG and its FSC group certificate members are evaluated as to how we all uphold these principles with our forest management.

**Principle #1: Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles** - Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.

**Principle #2: Tenure and Use Rights and Responsibilities** - Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.

**Principle #3: Indigenous Peoples' Rights** - The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.

**Principle #4: Community Relations, Workers' Rights, Social Impact** - Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.

**Principle #5: Benefits from the Forest** - Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.

**Principle #6: Environmental Impact** - Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.

**Principle #7: Management Plan** - A management plan – appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations – shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long-term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.

**Principle #8: Monitoring and Assessment** - Monitoring shall be conducted – appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management – to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.

**Principle #9: Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests** - Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.

**Principle #10: Plantations** - Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1-9, and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world's need for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.

## FSC standards for family forests and owners harvesting >2,000 mbf/year

To review the detailed FSC standards and indicators go to the FSC US website or follow this link: [US Standard v1.0](#). The FSC standards were last updated in July 2010.

There is some regional variation within the national standard and some indicators contain specific guidance for the Pacific Coast Region (Washington, Oregon, and California). Furthermore, this US Standard v1.0 has [specific indicators for Family Forests](#). The members of NNRG's FSC group certificate are evaluated annually as to their adherence with these indicators. You can find these standards online at:

<http://nnrg.org/our-services/get-certified/fsc/>

<https://us.fsc.org/preview.fsc-us-forest-management-standard-with-family-forest-indicators.a-196.pdf>

## Forest Stewardship Council® Certification Annual Renewal Questions

The following questions are addressed during the annual FSC check-in with NNRG:

1. Have there been any changes in property information?
2. Have there been any major changes in management objectives?
3. Have you conducted a commercial harvest project since the last check-in?
  - a. Please describe timber harvest activity: volume, species, grade, purchaser
  - b. Please describe the harvest methods, acres treated, stand prescription, and post-harvest activities
4. Have you conducted a pre-commercial thinning?
  - a. Please describe the stand, change in trees per acre, acres, how work was done
5. Do you have plans for an upcoming harvest?
  - a. If so, when? Methods? Acres? Treatment goals?
6. Have you done any value-added manufacturing since the last check-in?
  - a. If so, please describe
7. Has there been any commercial harvest of non-timber forest products?
  - a. Please describe the species, volume, area harvested, how you monitor the site
8. Have you used any pesticides or other chemicals in your forest?
  - a. Please provide the herbicide name, quantity used, date range of application, area treated, location, method of application, target species, observations post-herbicide use (monitoring!)
9. Has there been any new road construction?
  - a. If so, please describe
10. Describe any road maintenance and monitoring.
11. Have you had to do any bridge installation/removal?
  - a. If so, please describe
12. Have you had to do any culvert installation/removal?
  - a. If so, please describe

13. Have you had any erosion problems?
  - a. If so, please describe
14. Have you conducted any management activities next to a waterbody?
  - a. If so, please describe
15. Do you have problems with invasive species?
  - a. Which species?
  - b. How are you treating them?
16. Do you have old-growth on your forest?
  - a. Please describe any old-growth or changes to old-growth.
17. Describe how you have monitored your forest in the past year and how you are updating your management records.
18. Any sightings of rare, threatened, or endangered species?
  - a. Any work to enhance habitat?
  - b. Is your forest enrolled in any habitat programs with ODFW, WDFW, USFWS, or other programs?
19. Are you currently enrolled in cost-share programs?
  - a. If so, please describe
20. Do you need a site visit?