

AMERICAN FOREST & PAPER ASSOCIATION

# SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY



PRINCIPLES AND IMPLEMENTATION  
GUIDELINES

*Cover photo courtesy of Potlatch Corporation*

## PREAMBLE

The forest products industry has a strong record of stewardship on the land it owns and manages. Forest industry lands include some of the most productive forests in the world. Innovative programs to create habitats and landscapes, and to enhance the diversity of flora and fauna, offer excellent examples of how industry foresters employ modern forest science in the protection of locations that are unique in their geologic, ecologic, or historic value. At the same time, these forests are meeting the needs of our society for homebuilding and other building products, as well as for printing, packaging, and sanitary products. Many companies have effective programs to extend their technology and stewardship knowledge to nonindustrial private landowners who own most of the forestland in this country.

These Sustainable Forestry Principles, including the Implementation Guidelines, constitute the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) members' commitment to sustainable forestry and the measures by which the public can benchmark this commitment. AF&PA members are actively implementing these principles and practices. Their objective is to achieve a much broader practice of sustainable forestry throughout the United States. In this way they will perceptibly improve the performance of member companies, and will set new standards for the entire forest industry as well as for other forest landowners.

Sustainable forestry is a dynamic concept that will evolve with experience and new knowledge provided through research. AF&PA views these Principles and Implementation Guidelines as the latest of many steps in a progressive evolution of United States industrial forestry practices. Through this step AF&PA members seek to meet the needs of humanity for essential wood and paper products while protecting and enhancing other forest resource values.

# PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY

America's managed forests make a vital contribution to the nation and to the world by providing economic, consumer, environmental and aesthetic benefits indispensable to our quality of life. A vital forest-based economy provides wood and paper products, employment, and a viable tax base. Accomplishing sustainable forestry on private land requires a partnership among landowners, contractors, and the companies that purchase wood.

AF&PA members, therefore, support on the forestland they manage—and will promote on other lands—sustainable forestry practices. Moreover, AF&PA members will support efforts to protect private property rights and the ability of all private landowners to sustainably manage their forestland. This support stems from the AF&PA membership's belief that forest landowners have an important stewardship responsibility and commitment to society. In keeping with this responsibility, the members of the American Forest & Paper Association support the following principles:

## SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY

To practice sustainable forestry to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic which integrates the reforestation managing, growing, nurturing, and harvesting of trees for useful products with the conservation of soil, air and water quality, wildlife and fish habitat, and aesthetics.

## RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES

To use in its own forests, and promote among other forest landowners, sustainable forestry practices that are economically and environmentally responsible.

## FOREST HEALTH AND PRODUCTIVITY

To protect forests from wildfire, pests, diseases, and other damaging agents in order to maintain and improve long-term forest health and productivity.

## PROTECTING SPECIAL SITES

To manage its forests and lands of special significance (e.g., biologically, geologically, or historically significant) in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

To continuously improve the practice of forest management and also to monitor, measure and report the performance of our members in achieving our commitment to sustainable forestry.

# SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are intended to provide measures for evaluating our membership's compliance with the AF&PA Sustainable Forestry Principles. By January 1, 1995, all member companies must agree to adhere to the Sustainable Forestry Principles. During the implementation year of 1995, AF&PA members will develop the programs and practices necessary for adherence to the objectives and measures identified below. By January 1, 1996, compliance with the Sustainable Forestry Principles and Implementation Guidelines will be a condition of continued membership in AF&PA.

The following performance measures are written in the future tense to reflect the underlying premise of the Sustainable Forestry Principles, which is continuous improvement. While AF&PA member companies are committed to continuous improvement and assessment, these principles and guidelines also recognize the sustainable forestry efforts that are underway today throughout the U.S. forest products industry.

Owing to the wide diversity of forest types and conditions, AF&PA members recognize that implementation guidelines will be most effective if they are tailored to the unique forest conditions at the regional, ownership, or site level. For this reason, AF&PA member companies will individually or collectively—at the site, state, or regional level—adopt performance measures that are most appropriate for the given forest condition, even if they are different from those stated below, provided they are **fully consistent** with or exceed the spirit and intent of the objectives stated in this document.

# **I** **IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY ON AF&PA MEMBERS' FORESTS**

**OBJECTIVE 1. Broaden the practice of sustainable forestry by employing an array of scientifically, environmentally, and economically sound practices in the growth, harvest, and use of forests.**

**Performance Measures:**

a. Each AF&PA member company will define its own policies, programs, and plans to implement and achieve the AF&PA Sustainable Forestry Principles and Guidelines.

b. AF&PA members will, individually, through cooperative efforts, or through AF&PA, provide funding for forest research to improve the health, productivity, and management of all forests.

**OBJECTIVE 2. Promptly reforest harvested areas to ensure long-term forest productivity and conservation of forest resources.**

**Performance Measures:**

a. AF&PA members will reforest after final harvest by planting or direct seeding within two years, or by planned natural regeneration methods within five years.

AF&PA members will promote state-level reporting of the overall rate of reforestation success.

**OBJECTIVE 3. Protect the water quality in streams, lakes, and other waterbodies by establishing riparian protection measures based on soil type, terrain, vegetation, and other applicable factors, and by using EPA-approved Best Management Practices in all forest management operations.**

**Performance Measures:**

a. AF&PA members will meet or exceed all established Best Management Practices (BMPs) approved by EPA, all applicable state water quality laws and regulations, and the requirements of the Clean Water Act for forestland.

b. AF&PA members will establish and implement riparian protection measures for all perennial streams and lakes and involve a panel of experts at the state level to help identify goals and objectives for riparian protection.

c. AF&PA members will, individually, through cooperative efforts, or through AF&PA, provide funding for water quality research.

**OBJECTIVE 4. Enhance the quality of wildlife habitat by developing and implementing measures that promote habitat diversity and the conservation of plant and animal populations found in forest communities.**

**Performance Measures:**

a. Each AF&PA member company will define its own policies, programs, and plans to promote habitat diversity.

b. AF&PA members will, individually, through cooperative efforts or through AF&PA, provide funding for wildlife research.

**OBJECTIVE 5. Minimize the visual impact by designing harvests to blend into the terrain, by restricting clearcut size and/or by using harvest methods, age classes, and judicious placement of harvest units to promote diversity in forest cover.**

**Performance Measures:**

a. Each AF&PA member will define its own policies, programs, and plans to minimize the impact of harvesting on visual quality.

b. AF&PA members will develop and adopt, in each state where they operate, appropriate targets for managing the size of clearcuts. Where the average size of clearcut harvest areas exceeds 120 acres, AF&PA member companies will reduce the average size to no more than 120 acres, except when necessary to respond to forest health emergencies or other natural catastrophes.

c. AF&PA members will adopt a “green up” requirement, under which past clearcut harvest areas must have trees at least 3 years old or 5 feet high at the desired level of stocking before adjacent areas can be clearcut, or companies may adopt other, more comprehensive methods that provide age, habitat and aesthetic diversity.

**OBJECTIVE 6. Manage company lands of ecologic, geologic, or historic significance in a manner that accounts for their special qualities.**

**Performance Measures:**

a. AF&PA members will identify special sites and manage them in a manner appropriate to their unique features. AF&PA members may involve organizations with expertise in protecting special places to suggest how these lands can best be managed to maintain their unique character.

**OBJECTIVE 7. Contribute to biodiversity by enhancing landscape diversity and providing an array of habitats.**

**Performance Measures:**

a. AF&PA members will increase their support for research to improve the science and understanding of landscape management, ecosystem functions, and the conservation of biological diversity.

b. AF&PA members will continually apply the knowledge gained through research, science, technology, and field experience for conserving biological diversity.

**OBJECTIVE 8. Continue to improve forest utilization to help ensure the most efficient use of forest resources.**

**Performance Measures:**

a. AF&PA members will employ appropriate technology, processes, and practices to minimize waste and ensure efficient utilization of trees harvested.

**OBJECTIVE 9. Continue the prudent use of forest chemicals to improve forest health and growth while protecting employees, neighbors, the public, and sensitive areas, including streamcourses and adjacent lands.**

**Performance Measures:**

a. AF&PA members will meet or exceed all applicable label requirements, laws, and regulations concerning the use of fertilizers, herbicides, and other forest chemicals needed to protect forest health and increase growth.

# II IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY BY AF&PA MEMBERS IN THE PROCUREMENT OF WOOD AND FIBER FROM LOGGERS AND OTHER LANDOWNERS

**OBJECTIVE 10. Broaden the practice of sustainable forestry by further involving nonindustrial landowners, loggers, consulting foresters and company employees who are active in wood procurement and landowner assistance programs.**

**Performance Measures:**

a. AF&PA members will encourage landowners who sell timber to reforest following harvest and to use Best Management Practices by providing these landowners with information on the environmental and economic advantages of these practices.

b. AF&PA members will work closely with logging and state forestry associations, appropriate agencies and others in the forestry community to further improve the professionalism of loggers by establishing state groups (where none exist) and by cooperating with existing state groups to promote the training and education of loggers in:

- Awareness of AF&PA Sustainable Forestry Principles;
- Best Management Practices—including road construction and retirement, site preparation, streamside management, etc.;
- Regeneration and forest resource conservation;
- Awareness of responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act and other wildlife considerations;
- Logging safety;
- OSHA and wage and hour rules;
- Transportation; and
- Business management—including employee training, public relations, etc.

As a means of demonstrating AF&PA members' commitment to continuous improvement in sustainable forestry, state groups will be encouraged to sponsor training and education programs for loggers, employees involved in procurement and landowner assistance, contractors, and suppliers by January 1, 1996.

c. AF&PA will collect information from its members, state groups, and other sources in order to annually report:

- the number of landowners who receive information about forest regeneration from contractors, company employees, and others;
- how many of these landowners made an informed decision to apply BMPs and to regenerate the forest after harvest;
- the number of loggers who completed each year's training and education programs; and
- the percentage of wood delivered by loggers who have completed logger training and education programs.

d. AF&PA members will ensure their commitment to the Sustainable Forestry Principles is communicated throughout all levels of their companies—particularly to mill and woodland managers, wood procurement operations, and field foresters.

e. AF&PA members will support and promote efforts by consulting foresters, state and federal agencies, state groups, and programs like the American Tree Farm System, to educate and assist nonindustrial landowners and to encourage them to apply principles of sustainable forest management on their lands.

f. Each AF&PA member will clearly define and implement its own policies, programs, and plans to ensure that mill inventories and procurement practices do not compromise its adherence to the Principles of Sustainable Forestry.

# III

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR AF&PA MEMBER COMPANIES FOR PUBLIC REPORTING AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRACTICE OF SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY

**OBJECTIVE 11.** Publicly report AF&PA members' progress in fulfilling their commitment to sustainable forestry.

**Performance Measures:**

- a. AF&PA members will report annually to AF&PA on their compliance with AF&PA Sustainable Forestry Principles and Implementation Guidelines.
- b. AF&PA will issue an annual report to the public on its membership's performance regarding compliance with and progress on sustainable forestry, including a listing of all companies complying with the AF&PA Sustainable Forestry Principles and Implementation Guidelines.
- c. An advisory group of independent experts will assist in the preparation of the annual report, including validation of conclusions and the assessment of reported progress.

**OBJECTIVE 12.** Provide opportunities for the public and the forestry community to participate in the AF&PA membership's commitment to sustainable forestry.

**Performance Measures:**

- a. AF&PA members will support and promote appropriate mechanisms for public outreach, education, and involvement related to forest management, such as: 800 numbers; environmental education; and/or private and public sector technical assistance programs.
- b. AF&PA members will establish an appropriate procedure at the state level to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, or AF&PA members regarding practices that appear to be inconsistent with the AF&PA Sustainable Forestry Principles and Implementation Guidelines.
- c. AF&PA members will establish a national forum of loggers, landowners, and senior industry representatives, including CEO representation, that will meet at least twice annually to review progress toward the AF&PA Forestry Principles and Implementation Guidelines. The results of each meeting will be reported to the Forest Resources Board of Directors.

# **N** **AF&PA PUBLIC POLICY GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY** **ON ALL PRIVATE AND PUBLIC LAND IN THE UNITED STATES**

## **1. Increase Forest Growth, Quality, Diversity and Productivity by Practicing Sustainable Forestry.**

AF&PA members will support a national goal of sustainable forestry which seeks to increase growth and timber quality of all forests, so that the volume and quality of domestic timber resources available are adequate to meet public needs now and in the future. To accomplish this goal, AF&PA members will continue to: (a) increase the productivity of the forests they own and manage; (b) encourage the establishment of forests on marginal agricultural lands that could more profitably be managed for forestry; (c) work with the Forest Service and state agencies to strengthen growth, productivity, and timber quality monitoring programs; and (d) support federal, state, and local programs and policies that encourage retention and expansion of the productive forestland base and promote long-term forestry investment.

**2. Help to Implement Appropriate Ecosystem Management on Federal Lands.** AF&PA members will work with Congress and public agencies to appropriately define and implement active ecosystem management on all National Forest System and Bureau of Land Management lands. This will improve the consistency of land management decision-making and help to accomplish land management goals. To be effective, this effort must include improved accountability for meeting goals. Priority attention should be given to public lands with forest health problems.

**3. Reduce the Risk and Occurrence of Wildfires.** AF&PA members will support forest fire protection programs to minimize losses from wildfire. AF&PA members will use on their lands, and promote on all other lands, appropriate methods, including prescribed fire, to reduce forest fuels, improve regeneration success and wildlife habitat, and minimize the potential for catastrophic wildfire. When prescribed fire is used, sound smoke management guidelines and regulations will be followed.

## **4. Promote and Utilize Integrated Pest Management.**

AF&PA members will use on their lands, and promote on all other lands, the principles of integrated pest management in the selection and implementation of pest control programs, including the selective and safe use of pesticides.

## **5. Encourage Forest Health and Productivity Research.**

AF&PA members will support research to minimize wildfire, pests, diseases, and other damaging agents affecting U.S. forests. AF&PA members will encourage research and will monitor the work of other scientists studying the potential impact of climate change, atmospheric pollution, and the cumulative effects on forest health and productivity.

**6. Encourage Continuing Education.** AF&PA members will support continuing professional education in state-of-the-art techniques to integrate the management of all forest resources. AF&PA members will inform all employees involved in forest management of their company's plans, policies, and programs to implement the AF&PA Sustainable Forestry Principles and Implementation Guidelines.

**7. Recognize Excellence.** AF&PA members will recognize and promote excellence to improve environmental performance by those engaged in forestry operations.

## **8. Protect the Ability of All Private Landowners to Manage their Forestland in a Sustainable Manner.**

AF&PA members will work with Congress, state legislatures, and federal, state, and local agencies to ensure that laws, regulations, tax structures, and policies promote, rather than compromise, the ability of private landowners to sustainably manage their forestland.

as approved by  
AF&PA Board of Directors  
on October 14, 1994

An aerial photograph of a dense forest with a winding river. The trees are in various shades of green and yellow, suggesting autumn. The river is a light blue color, winding through the forest. The overall scene is a lush, natural landscape.

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