



Public Briefing Paper for
FSC® Forest Management Certification Re-Assessment of
Columbia Forest Products - North American Resource Pool
Old Fort, NC, USA
March 3, 2024

Introduction – Preferred by Nature is conducting Forest Stewardship Council (FSC®) Forest Management and Chain of Custody certification re-assessments of **Columbia Forest Products - North American Resource Pool (CFP)** with an office located in Old Fort, NC. **CFP** has been certified by Preferred by Nature (formerly NEPCo) since August 1, 1999 (NC-FM/COC-000091). The re-assessment includes 1 group member in Tennessee, totaling approximately 25,892 hectares. The re-assessment will be begin on May 14, 2024.

Scope of the Certification Re-Assessment – The forest management certification re-assessment will assess the environmental, silvicultural, and socioeconomic aspects of the certified forests managed by **CFP**, using the *FSC-US Forest Management Standard (v1.1)* and the *FSC Standard For Group Entities in Forest Management Groups (FM-STD-30-005)*. To obtain a copy of these guidelines, please visit the FSC-US website (at <https://us.fsc.org/en-us/certification/forest-management-certification>) or contact Preferred by Nature directly by telephone, fax, or e-mail as listed below. Preferred by Nature is accredited by the Forest Stewardship Council™ (FSC®)¹ and this re-assessment process must follow procedures which have been approved by the FSC.

Re-Assessment Team Composition – The re-assessment will be conducted by:

- Randy Coats, Lead Auditor, Forester

Re-assessment Steps and Schedule – Following is a short description of the certification process and a tentative agenda:

- ◆ Re-assessment organization – The Preferred by Nature auditors and **CFP** staff will meet at **CFP**'s office in Old Fort, NC, on May 14, 2024.
- ◆ Field assessments – The auditors will visit sites managed by **CFP** that are included in the scope of the certificate from May 14-15, 2024.
- ◆ Re-assessment briefing – Prior to departure, the auditors will meet with CFP managers and other parties to finalize their data collection and present preliminary findings.
- ◆ Stakeholder consultation – The auditors will conduct interviews with stakeholders prior to, during, and after the re-assessment.
- ◆ Draft report production – The auditors will produce a confidential draft report that will be circulated for comment to **CFP**. This should occur 45 days after completion of the re-assessment field work.

¹ FSC® A000535

- ◆ Certification decision – Upon receipt of comments on the draft report from **CFP** and other general stakeholder comments, Preferred by Nature will reach a certification decision. Barring unforeseen obstacles, this should occur by July 15, 2024.

Your Input Sought – As a part of the forest certification re-assessment process we invite stakeholders to offer comment and feedback on **CFP**'s forest management in relation to conformance with the requirements of the forest management standard referenced above. We welcome input, either public or confidential, in whatever form is easiest and most secure for you. Your input will be valuable at any stage of the re-assessment process, but we would prefer to receive your comments either prior to the re-assessment, during the re-assessment, or prior to June 17, 2024 so that we can take them into consideration in reaching a certification decision by July 15, 2024. Your options for communicating your observations to us are as follows:

1. Meet with the Preferred by Nature audit team during or shortly after the fieldwork.
2. Call and give comments to Randy Coots, the Preferred by Nature staff person responsible for coordinating this certification re-assessment.
3. Submit written comments by mail, FAX or email to Randy Coots. Unless you request otherwise, these comments will be kept confidential and are solely for the purposes of auditing **CFP** as described in this briefing.

Contacting Preferred by Nature

Randy Coots, Forestry Specialist, United States

- ◆ Email: rcoots@preferredbynature.org
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The source of any information provided will be kept confidential and will be available to only the FSC and Preferred by Nature staff.

Stakeholders who may wish to dispute any aspect of the forest certification process or decision can access Preferred by Nature's Complaints, Appeals and Dispute resolution procedures at <https://preferredbynature.org/certification/fsc/complaints-and-resolutions>.