

# Spanish Forest

2016-2023 Independent Forest Audit

Management Unit Action Plan

# Spanish Forest 2023 Independent Forest Audit

## Action Plan Submission Signature Page

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# Spanish Forest 2023 Independent Forest Audit

## Action Plan Approval Signature Page

**Approved By:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sylvain Levesque". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Sylvain Levesque  
*Regional Director*  
MNRF Northeast Region  
Date:

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## Introduction

The 2023 Spanish Forest Independent Forest Audit (IFA) Report was accepted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry on September 26th, 2023 for an IFA conducted by Arbex Forest Resource Consultants Ltd. for the seven-year period of April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2023.

Upon acceptance of the audit report, it was determined that an action plan is needed to address the findings. A total of six findings were noted for the management unit. For each finding, this action plan provides a description of the actions required, the organization and position responsible, timelines for each of the action items, as well as the method of tracking progress for each action.

Based on a cause analysis on the 2023 IFA findings, finding #3 and #4 have been assessed at a corporate MNRF level and will be considered as part of the regular corporate planning and policy review cycle. They will not be reported on in this Management Unit Action Plan.

# Findings

## **Finding #1:**

Some Lessard Welding Bridges allow road material to enter watercourses.

### **Action Required:**

1. Interfor will formally update bridge inspection form to identify Lessard Welding Bridges with gaps.
2. Interfor will identify all Lessard Welding Bridges exhibiting gaps and apply erosion protection measures.
3. Interfor will report the remedial actions taken to address gaps found with some Lessard Welding Bridges.

### **Organization and Position Responsible:**

1. Interfor Corporation, Planning Forester
2. Interfor Corporation, Operations Forester
3. Interfor Corporation, Planning Forester

### **Deadline Date:**

1. April 1, 2024
2. December 31, 2024
3. March 31, 2025

### **Method of Tracking Progress:**

1. Water Crossing Inventory Tool
2. Survey 123: Crossing Inspections Interfor East
3. Annual Report – a summary of the remedial actions will be provided as part of the reporting of progress toward completion of IFA actions (i.e., Section 2.1.4 (g)).

**Finding #2:**

Requirements of the Forest Management Plan and the Forest Compliance Handbook related to the preparation of Annual Compliance Operations Plans were not consistently met by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Sudbury District Office.

**Action Required:**

1. Within the District an Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist (IRM) will initiate the development of the Annual Compliance Operations Plan (ACOP). The IRM will solicit input from District staff every December/January, to identify needs/appropriate direction for the following year's ACOP.
2. The current year's ACOP will be assessed for effectiveness by March of that operating year.
3. A draft ACOP will be prepared and recommended for approval by March 15th each year, via email from the IRM Technical Specialist to the Resources Management Supervisor, seeking District Manager approval.

**Organization and Position Responsible:**

1. MNRF Sudbury District – Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist
2. MNRF Sudbury District –District Manager
3. MNRF Sudbury District –District Manager

**Deadline Date:**

1. Annually by February 1<sup>st</sup>
2. Annually by March 15<sup>th</sup>
3. Sudbury District to have an approved ACOP in place by April 1st annually.

**Method of Tracking Progress:**

1. Notes, minutes, emails
2. Draft ACOP
3. Confirm that ACOP is complete and approved by April 1st or assess why it is not. Copy of DM-approved ACOP retained on file at each District office.

**Finding #5:**

Annual Reports contain errors in tabulation, digital mapping, and inconsistencies in reporting.

**Action Required:**

1. Interfor will create tracking system for road construction and maintenance activities invoiced through roads funding.
2. Interfor and the MNRF will conduct detailed review of the Annual Report submission.

**Organization and Position Responsible:**

1. Interfor, Planning Forester
2. Interfor: Operations Forester, Silviculture Supervisor and MNRF, Management Forester

**Deadline Date:**

1. March 31, 2024
2. Annually

**Method of Tracking Progress:**

1. ArcGIS: Roads Funding and AR Prep
2. Emails, documents on file, List of Required Alterations

## **Finding #6:**

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Sustainable Licence Holder did not fully address recommendations in the 2016 Independent Forest Audit.

### Note on Finding #6:

During the development of this action plan, through means of a cause analysis it was determined that recent updates to the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocols (IFAPP), including, auditors wording recommendations as findings, completing cause analyses, and having yearly status reporting requirements within the Annual Reports should greatly increase follow through of actions for the 2023 Action Plan. These updates that have already been done, should address the concerns from the auditors going forward with the new action plan, encouraging complete follow through with yearly Annual Reporting Requirements for Status updates as opposed to the old version of a complete stand-alone status report that used to be due two years after the Independent Forest Audit (IFA).

MNRF and the Sustainable Licence Holder have reviewed recommendations #3, #4, and #5 from the 2016 IFA report, associated action plan, and status report and assessed which parts of the recommendations had been fully addressed, to incorporate the remaining actions that have not fully been addressed into the current action plan. Recommendation #4 from the 2016 IFA (relating to MNRF District ACOP completion) will be addressed under the 2023 Action Plan for Finding #2 and will be tracked according to the methods described above relating to this Finding. Recommendation #5 (relating to MNRF District SEM implementation) has been brought forward as Finding #4 in this 2023 audit report and has been deemed corporate in nature and will not be tracked in the status reporting for this action plan. Recommendation #3 from the 2016 IFA (relating to nuisance beaver protocols) is not addressed elsewhere within this action plan, although parts of the former Recommendation #3 had already been addressed in the 2016 IFA Status Report, the action described below will follow up on the incomplete actions to carry forward the intent to finalize a protocol to implement going forward.

### **Action Required:**

1. MNRF and the Sustainable Licence Holder will have a joint meeting to discuss the progress and status of actions for recommendation #3 from the previous IFA regarding nuisance beaver protocols to ensure adequate progress has been made before reporting this action as complete.

### **Organization and Position Responsible:**

1. MNRF Sudbury District – Management Forester, District Manager, Interfor - Planning Forester, Operations Forester



**Deadline Date:**

1. April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

**Method of Tracking Progress:**

1. Finalized Beaver Protocol, revised protocol and document changes, minutes from meetings, and Annual Reports