



**Public Briefing Paper for  
FSC® Forest Management Certification Re-Assessment of  
Certified Forest Management LLC  
in  
Shreveport, Louisiana USA  
February 28, 2022**

**Introduction** – Preferred by Nature is conducting Forest Stewardship Council (FSC®) Forest Management and Chain of Custody certification re-assessments of Certified Forest Management LLC (CFM) with an office located in Shreveport, LA. CFM has been certified by Preferred by Nature (formerly NEPCo) since 2012 (NC-FM/COC-006002). The re-assessment includes 507 properties in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, New York, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia and Vermont totaling approximately 360,000 hectares. The re-assessment will begin on April 11, 2022.

**Scope of the Certification Re-Assessment** – The forest management certification re-assessment will assess the environmental, silvicultural, and socioeconomic aspects of the certified properties included in the certificate, using the *FSC-US Forest Management Standard (v1.1)* and the *FSC Group Certification Standard (FSC-STD-30-005, v2.0)*. 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®)<sup>1</sup> 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, Forestry; and,
- Dr. Stephen Grado, Socio-economic Specialist

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

- ◆ Re-assessment organization – After document review, planning and initial interviews, the Preferred by Nature auditors and CFM staff will meet onsite on April 11, 2022.
- ◆ Field assessments – The auditors will audit properties from April 11-14 (AR/TX/LA); April 19-20 (SC/GA); April 26 (NY); May 23-26 (MS/AL).
- ◆ Re-assessment briefing – At the end of the field assessments, the auditors will meet with CFM 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 CFM. This should occur 30 days after completion of the re-assessment field work.

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<sup>1</sup> FSC® A000535

- ◆ Certification decision – Upon receipt of comments on the draft report from CFM and other general stakeholder comments, Preferred by Nature will reach a certification decision. Barring unforeseen obstacles, this should occur by July 1, 2022.

**Your Input Sought** – As a part of the forest certification re-assessment process we invite stakeholders to offer comment and feedback on management of properties included in CFM's group certificate 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 May 1, 2022 so that we can take them into consideration in reaching a certification decision by July 1, 2022. 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 Steve Grado the Preferred by Nature audit team member responsible for coordinating stakeholder participation.
3. Submit written comments by mail, FAX or email to Steve Grado. Unless you request otherwise, these comments will be kept confidential and are solely for the purposes of auditing CFM as described in this briefing.

*Steve Grado, Socioeconomic Auditor*

- ◆ Email: [sgrado@hotmail.com](mailto:sgrado@hotmail.com)
- ◆ Telephone: 662-325-2792 (work); 662-617-3691 (cell)
- ◆ FAX: 662-325-8726
- ◆ Mailing address: 707 Shadowood Lane, Starkville, MS 39759-4133

For more information or to provide comments on CFM, you can also contact TM, the Preferred by Nature staff person responsible for coordinating this recertification audit.

### **Contacting Preferred by Nature**

*Kara Wires, Technical Manager, United States & Canada*

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- ◆ Website: [www.preferredbynature.org](http://www.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>.