

Mitigation Options by Specified Risk Topic

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HCV 3: Native Longleaf Pine Systems

The following mitigation options are available to certificate holders so that they may implement Control Measure CM 3.1 when sourcing from areas of specified risk designated for HCV 3 Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS).

CENTRAL THEME: Education & Outreach

The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any level of mitigation:

Using materials as described below, communicate to audiences (also described below) the social benefits and values of Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS), threats from forest management activities (as described in the FSC US National Risk Assessment) and related loss of values, and opportunities for conservation through management that restores or maintains NLPS and reduces or eliminates these threats. Communications should recognize the importance of the forest understory and fire to NLPS. The desired outcome of these communications is engaging landowners, foresters and loggers in conservation of NLPS within the specified risk area and the Organization's supply area.

- **Materials:** Materials are developed by or developed in cooperation with organizations/individuals with expertise in NLPS conservation, or developed in collaboration with FSC US. Materials are delivered in a manner that has a proven or reasonable expectation of effectiveness in achieving the above defined desired outcome. Materials may already exist or may need to be created.
- **Audiences:** Communications are directed toward audiences where there is a proven or reasonable expectation of effectiveness in achieving the above defined desired outcome. Depending upon the Organization's location in the supply chain, communications may be directly with landowners, foresters, or loggers, or through intermediaries such as community members, forest managers, suppliers, forestry associations or landowner associations, or through collaboration with organizations/individuals already working for conservation of NLPS.

INTENT: The intent of this mitigation option is to implement education and outreach-related actions that will result in changes to on-the-ground forest management activities that improve restoration or maintenance of NLPS, and thereby mitigate the risk of sourcing materials from sites where NLPS in the specified risk area are threatened by forest management activities.

CENTRAL THEME: Procurement Policy

The following is offered as an option for Organizations that purchase directly from the source forest:

Develop/adapt a procurement policy that reflects the above Education & Outreach communications themes and clearly states the requirement that the landowner/forester/logger at the source forest will not supply materials from forests where Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS) are threatened as a result

of the forest management activities that produced the forest materials. This will require providing a description of the forest type (as it occurs in the supply area), potential threats to NLPS from forest management activities (as described in the FSC US National Risk Assessment), and the kinds of activities that would maintain or enhance NLPS forest in the specified risk area.

NOTE: Actions to demonstrate policy enforcement and communicate policies on sourcing to suppliers should be audited under the Due Diligence system requirements within the 40-005V3- 1 standard section 1.1

INTENT: The intent of this mitigation option is to implement a procurement policy that will either result in avoidance of materials from sites where NLPS is threatened by forest management activities, or result in changes to on-the-ground forest management activities that mitigate the risk of sourcing materials from sites where NLPS in the specified risk area are threatened by forest management activities.

CENTRAL THEME: Research & Mapping

The following is offered as a two-part option for when a 'High' level of mitigation is required:

1. Engage with and/or provide monetary or in-kind resources to an entity or alliance that is working to augment current maps of existing and restorable Native Longleaf Pine Systems within the specified risk area, using remote sensing or other techniques that do not require landowner declarations regarding their ownerships; and
2. Use the results of the mapping work to improve implementation of another mitigation option or demonstrate that the results of the research are being used in some other way to improve maintenance or enhancement of NLPS.

INTENT: The intent of this mitigation option is to implement research-related actions and then use the research outputs to increase the effectiveness of another implemented mitigation option that, in turn, will result in changes to on-the-ground forest management activities that improve restoration or maintenance of NLPS, and thereby mitigate the risk of sourcing materials from sites where NLPS in the specified risk area are threatened by forest management activities.

CENTRAL THEME: Planning

The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any level of mitigation:

Engage in public land (Federal, state and/or local) conservation planning processes, and, when possible, the implementation of public land plans, that include, or could potentially include, goals, objectives and/or actions that are intended to achieve conservation of existing Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS) within the specified risk area and the Organization's supply area. This may include: general natural resource planning and plans; planning and plans for specific forests, natural areas, or other managed areas; planning and plans for NLPS-dependent species; and/or regional planning and plans directly for NLPS itself. The desired outcome of this engagement is to increase and improve forest management practices that conserve NLPS.

NOTE: There are some situations where engagement/support by the Organization may not be possible for both the planning process and the plan implementation (e.g., when the relevant plan

has already been developed, or when there is an opportunity to participate in a planning process where implementation of the plan will be the complete responsibility of a public agency and there is no opportunity to engage or support implementation).

INTENT: The intent of this mitigation option is to implement planning-related actions that will result in changes to on-the-ground forest management activities that improve restoration or maintenance of NLPS, and thereby mitigate the risk of sourcing materials from sites where NLPS in the specified risk area are threatened by forest management activities.

CENTRAL THEME: Implement Management Activities

The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any level of mitigation:

Engage with and/or provide monetary or in-kind resources to conservation organizations or similar entities (as described below) that are facilitating active, on-the-ground implementation of management activities (as described below) to restore or maintain existing examples of Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS), with a goal of long-term conservation of this system within the specified risk area and the Organization's supply area.

- Conservation Entities: These may include: non-governmental organizations that have active programs/projects to conserve NLPS; federal, state and/or local governmental organizations with natural resource conservation responsibilities or goals; and/or organizations that have active programs/projects focused on habitat conservation for species dependent upon NLPS.
- Management Activities: These may focus on any of the sub-categories of NLPS and should include efforts to: increase and improve the use of existing best management practices for NLPS; increase the use of fire as a management tool; restore and maintain native understory communities; and restore and maintain essential hydrology.

NOTE: In this situation, 'best management practices' are not intended to specifically reference State-established BMPs for water quality, but instead established practices that are effective in restoring or maintaining functional NLPS.

INTENT: The intent of this mitigation option is to implement on-the-ground forest management activities that improve restoration or maintenance of NLPS, and thereby mitigate the risk of sourcing materials from sites where NLPS in the specified risk area are threatened by forest management activities.

CENTRAL THEME: Landowner Incentives

The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any level of mitigation:

Engage with and/or provide monetary or in-kind resources to: 1) conservation organizations or similar entities that are supporting or promoting programs or projects to develop new or augment existing incentive programs for landowner who restore, maintain or enhance existing examples of Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS) within the specified risk area and the Organization's supply area; or 2) organizations that work to connect landowners with incentives provided by other entities within the same area. These organizations may include: non-governmental organizations that have active

programs/projects to conserve NLPS; federal, state and/or local governmental organizations; and/or organizations that have active programs/ projects to conserve habitat for species dependent upon NLPS. If the incentive involves a working forest easement, the easement language should include requirements for use of compatible forest management practices that will restore, maintain or enhance the NLPS.

INTENT: The intent of this mitigation option is to implement actions to increase incentives for landowners that will result in changes to on-the-ground forest management activities that improve restoration or maintenance of NLPS, and thereby mitigate the risk of sourcing materials from sites where NLPS in the specified risk area are threatened by forest management activities.

The following is offered as an option for Organizations that have direct contact with the landowners that supply their forest materials:

Provide an incentive(s) to landowners for conserving existing high quality or near high quality occurrences of Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS); or facilitate landowners' access to incentives provided by other entities that will conserve the existing high quality or near high quality occurrences of NLPS.

INTENT: The intent of this mitigation option is to implement actions to increase incentives for landowners that will result in changes to on-the-ground forest management activities that improve restoration or maintenance of NLPS, and thereby mitigate the risk of sourcing materials from sites where NLPS in the specified risk area are threatened by forest management activities.