

Mitigation Options by Specified Risk Topic

Excerpt from FSC US Controlled Wood Regional Meeting Report: SOUTHEAST & MISSISSIPPI ALLUVIAL VALLEY REGIONS: ATLANTA, GA – July 31, 2018

HCV 1: Southern Appalachian Critical Biodiversity Area

The US Controlled Wood National Risk Assessment identifies two drivers of biodiversity in this CBA that may be threatened by forest management activities: Montane Longleaf Pine and Aquatic Habitats.

- Montane Longleaf Pine: As the specified risk area associated with this CBA overlaps with the specified risk area associated with HCV 3 Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS), any Organization that is mitigating risks associated with sourcing from areas of NLPS that are within this CBA will already be mitigating the identified risk associated with this driver of biodiversity, and no additional mitigation is needed.
- Aquatic Habitats: Mitigation to address the identified risk associated with this driver of biodiversity will still be required, and the mitigation options are provided below. Please note, however, that due to the very similar input provided on this topic for both the Central Appalachian CBA and the Southern Appalachian CBA, the mitigation options are the same. This will allow an Organization that sources from both areas of specified risk to use the same option to mitigate risk in both areas.

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 1 Southern Appalachian Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA).

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 conservation values of aquatic biodiversity, threats from poorly implemented forest management activities (as described in the FSC US National Risk Assessment), and opportunities for conservation through management practices that reduce or eliminate these threats, including but not limited to forest management activities on steep slopes, and practices that will prevent siltation. The desired outcome of these communications is engaging landowners, foresters, and loggers in increasing and improving Best Management Practice (BMP) implementation that focuses on aquatic biodiversity conservation 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 aquatic biodiversity 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 aquatic biodiversity.

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 maintenance or enhancement of aquatic biodiversity, and thereby mitigate the risk of sourcing materials from sites where the aquatic biodiversity in the specified risk area is 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 currently conducting, or has the capacity to initiate, research on effectiveness of water quality Best Management Practices (BMPs) for conserving aquatic biodiversity, or on identifying specific landscapes within the specified risk area that include forests where there is higher level of the identified risk; and
2. If research on effectiveness of BMPs is completed, then advocate for changes to state BMPs that reflect the results of the research. If mapping of higher risk areas is completed, then use the results of the mapping 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 aquatic biodiversity.

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 maintenance or enhancement of aquatic biodiversity, and thereby mitigate the risk of sourcing materials from sites where the aquatic biodiversity in the specified risk area is threatened by forest management activities.

CENTRAL THEME: Conservation Initiatives

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 partnerships, organizations or similar entities that are supporting or promoting programs/projects to develop new or augment existing programs within the specified risk area and the Organization's supply area that will: a) result in increased and improved implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) with a focus on aquatic biodiversity conservation; and/or b) result in increased access to incentive programs for landowner who restore, maintain or enhance forests in a way that will conserve aquatic conservation, with a particular focus on forests within areas of the specified risk area identified as having higher risk. These entities may include: 1) partnerships (government and/or non-government organizations), or non-governmental organizations working alone, that have active programs/projects to conserve aquatic biodiversity or the forests important for doing so; and/or 2) federal, state and/or local governmental organizations.

INTENT: The intent of this mitigation option is to implement actions through conservation programs/projects that will result in changes to on-the-ground forest management activities that improve maintenance or enhancement of aquatic biodiversity, and thereby mitigate the risk of sourcing materials from sites where the aquatic biodiversity in the specified risk area is threatened by forest management activities.

CENTRAL THEME: Direct Influence

The following are offered as options for Organizations that purchase directly from the source forest:

1. Engage with a conservation organization or similar entities, or collaborate with FSC US, to identify landscapes of particular concern related to the risk of receiving non-certified supplies from areas where aquatic biodiversity are threatened by forest management activities, and then communicate this information to suppliers, along with: 1) recommended Best Management Practices that will conserve aquatic biodiversity; 2) contact information for organizations that may be interested in working with the landowner on conserving the forest in question in a manner that will continue to conserve the aquatic biodiversity; and 3) a requirement that the landowner/forester/logger at the source forest either will not provide materials from the landscapes identified, or will document that the forest management practices implemented in the source forest did not threaten aquatic biodiversity.
2. Document acceptable implementation of Best Management Practices that conserve aquatic biodiversity for harvests that produce non-certified materials that will be controlled by the Organization.
3. Include Best Management Practices that will conserve aquatic biodiversity in harvest plans and/or in contracts made with loggers for harvests that produce non-certified materials that will be controlled by the Organization and require in those harvest plans and/or contracts that the Best Management Practices are implemented.

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