Environmental Certification: Alternative Strategies for Non-Industrial Private Forest Landowners in Louisiana

Final Report

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PREFACE

Wood products environmental certification has been identified by an American Forest & Paper Association (AFPA) task force as one of the top issues facing the industry. As is the case with other environmental certification programs, wood products certification exists to provide uniform and scientific guidelines for assessing the relative sustainability of various timber producing operations and to provide an independently verified basis for potential market place claims. Wood product certification grew out of consumer environmental concerns for forests in general and concern for the fate of tropical rainforests in particular. Also, the efforts of many conservation organizations to assess timber harvesting and its associated impacts necessitated a need for organizations specializing in third party certification of sustainable forest management.

These environmental non-government organizations (NGOs) seek to provide an alternative to consumer boycotts of tropical wood products. These groups are opposed to consumer boycotts of tropical timber, and believe certification for sustainability provides a better economic alternative for both local communities dependent on forest resources and national governments. As explained by Debbie Hammel, Director, Forestry Programs, Scientific Certification Systems (SCS), an environmental certification company, fundamental to this process is the evaluation of management practices against objective and regionally appropriate principles of sustainable forestry. The SCS certification program calls for ongoing, periodic monitoring to assure continued adherence to management plans and practices, and to assure adequate tracking of the chain-of-custody of products from certified operations (i.e. from the forest to the retailer and to the final consumer).

It appears that efforts to environmentally certify wood products will continue. In this context, a myriad of pressures has been brought to bear on public and private timberland owners. The current social and political climate warranted an immediate examination of issues regarding participation and strategic development necessary for non-industrial private forest landowners to adjust to these phenomena.

This study identifies non-industrial private forest landowner attitudes and beliefs toward environmental certification. Respondents also identified alternative strategies to third-party certification. Results can help timberland owners understand the implications of certification as well as help develop planning and marketing tools for those that desire involvement in certifying their forest resources. Beyond individual timberland owners, this information may be useful in ultimately developing an industry-wide certification strategy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Dr. James E. Granskog, Project Leader, Forest Resources Law and Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Research Station for supporting this research and for having the confidence in me to successfully undertake this study. I also wish to thank JoAnn Doucet, Research Associate, Louisiana Forest Products Laboratory, Louisiana State University for invaluable help on this project and the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service for supplying the database of Louisiana forestland owners, without which, this study could not have been conducted.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Demographics

- Over 50% of respondents are 65 yrears or older and earn over $75,000 annually.

- 77% are married and 63% have a college degree or advanced degree.

Forestland Ownership

- Average ownership for all respondents is 760 acres.

- Over 50 percent of respondents own less than 200 acres while only 15 percent own 100 acres or more.

- 85.5 percent have harvested timber from their lands. Only 10.5 percent of respondents said the harvest was for their own personal use while 80.3 percent said the harvest was for sale.

- For the 85.5 percent of respondents that said they have harvested timber from their land, the primary products sold are sawlogs, pulpwood and fuelwood for their own use.

Certification

- Only 39% of respondents believe certification is necessary on private land, but more so believe it should be done on state, federal and tropical forests.

- Respondents believe that certification is being promulgated primarily from non-governmental environmental organizations (NGOs). This group is followed by the third-party certifiers themselves and consultants that stand to benefit from certification activities. Consumer demand ranked last.

- The only entity that respondents trust to conduct forest certification is certified foresters. Ranked last is the federal government.

- 56 percent of respondents somewhat agree or strongly agree that involvement of the forestry community in certification discussions should take place. However, only 16 percent agree that the forestry community has been adequately involved in such discussions.

- Respondents are generally not averse to having certifiers check their forestry operations.

- Only 2.5 percent of respondents said they would pay for the cost to certify their forestland.

Alternatives to Certification

- Three suggestions comprise 75 percent of the suggested alternatives. The first is having the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) be the certifying agency. The point here is that respondents felt that adherence to state guidelines is sufficient and that monitoring by the LDAF would be useful.

I. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

Environmental Certification

Environmental product certification arose out of consumer demands for more 'environmentally friendly' products as well as consumer confusion and distrust of environmental claims being made by product manufacturers. For instance, research has shown that consumers are confused by 'green' symbols used by manufacturers (e.g. the recycling symbol), whether symbols refer to the actual product or its packaging, and the terms used by manufacturers in environmental labeling (e.g. biodegradable, ozone friendly, pre-consumer and post-consumer). In addition to confusion, consumers are often suspicious of manufacturer advertising and product claims, environmental or otherwise (Coddington 1993). This skepticism has arisen out of conflicting information provided by manufacturers and from several cases of environmental or green fraud.

Thus, environmental certification programs exist to allow credible, third party organizations to pass judgment on the environmental performance of products and packages, rather than leave assertions to product manufacturers themselves (Coddington 1993). These programs have been developed to overcome the problems of consumer confusion and mistrust by providing consumers with important environmental information, which is documented and verified by an independent certifying organization. In essence, certification exists as a method of reducing consumer anxiety or cognitive dissonance regarding the environmental impact of the products they purchase and consume.

Forest Products Certification

Environmental certification of forest products and forestry practices is fast becoming one of the most pressing issues facing the forest products industry. In response to environmental concerns, some environmental organizations, retailers and wood products companies are developing standards to encourage consumers to purchase wood originating from certified sustainable forests. These efforts are intended to counter the common perception by the general public that most forest practices involving the harvesting of wood do irreversible

damage to the environment (Petersen 1994). The basis for this action is a perceived need for consumers to be assured by neutral third-party organizations that forest products companies are employing sound practices that will ensure a sustainable forest. In addition to countering negative perceptions by consumers and the general public, it is believed that companies that prove themselves to be environmentally responsible will benefit from certification by differentiating their products in the marketplace and thus acquiring a larger share of the market. "The assumption behind these initiatives is that consumer interest in the forest dilemma is strong," (Upton and Bass 1996) and this interest may cause discrimination in favor of timber from sustainably managed forests and a willingness to pay any associated extra cost.

While only a small number of wood products manufacturers are currently involved in manufacturing or purchasing certified wood products, and only about one-half of one percent of internationally traded wood products had actually been certified by 1994 (Baharuddin and Simula 1994), the potential exists for increased industry participation (Lyke 1996). However, critics of the environmental certification of wood products question whether there is sufficient consumer demand for certified wood products and whether consumers will be willing to pay a 'green' premium to acquire such products (Baharuddin and Simula 1994; Bourke 1995; Waffle 1994). Without the ability to charge such a premium, manufacturers are concerned that they will have to incur the additional costs associated with certification, or their products will be at a cost disadvantage to uncertified wood products or other substitute materials (Upton and Bass 1996). Additional costs might be necessary for chain-of-custody procedures. Chain-of-custody is the tracking of certified wood from the forest to the consumer. Costs include hardware, software and personnel to manage certified product flows through a manufacturing facility and between trading partners.

Previous studies of certification perceptions and attitudes have been done for various stakeholder segments in the United States such as consumers, homebuilders, architects and home center retailers (Ozanne and Vlosky 1997; Vlosky and Ozanne 1997). To date however, little research has been done to understand the perspective of the non-industrial

private forestland (NIPF) owner. Accordingly, to better understand wood products environmental certification and its implications for this stakeholder group, this research study had the objectives of better understanding NIPF perceptions about certification in general and their opinions on potential alternatives to third-party certification.

Study Objectives

The objectives of this research were to:

1. Identify non-industrial private forestland owner beliefs and attitudes regarding certification.
2. Gauge potential for their participation in certification.
3. Identify alternative strategies to third-party environmental certification.

II. RESULTS

Response Rate

6,661 names were randomly selected from a database of 41,000 forestland owners in Louisiana. 1,176 of the surveys were either undeliverable or inappropriate due to the respondent being deceased or not owning forestland.

1,089 surveys were returned as useable, an adjusted response rate of 20 percent. Industrial timberland owners comprised 16 percent of the respondents (171 respondents) while the balance (981 respondents) was non-industrial private forestland owners. The results conveyed in this report pertain only to the 981 non-industrial respondents.

Respondent Forestland Ownership by Parish

This section reviews the geographic distribution of the respondents in Louisiana. Figure 1 shows the parishes in Louisiana. Figure 2 shows the forest distribution in the state and Figure 3 shows the geographic distribution of respondent forest ownership by parish and Figure 4 indicates the top and bottom 15 parishes by forestland ownership.

Figure 1. Louisiana Parishes

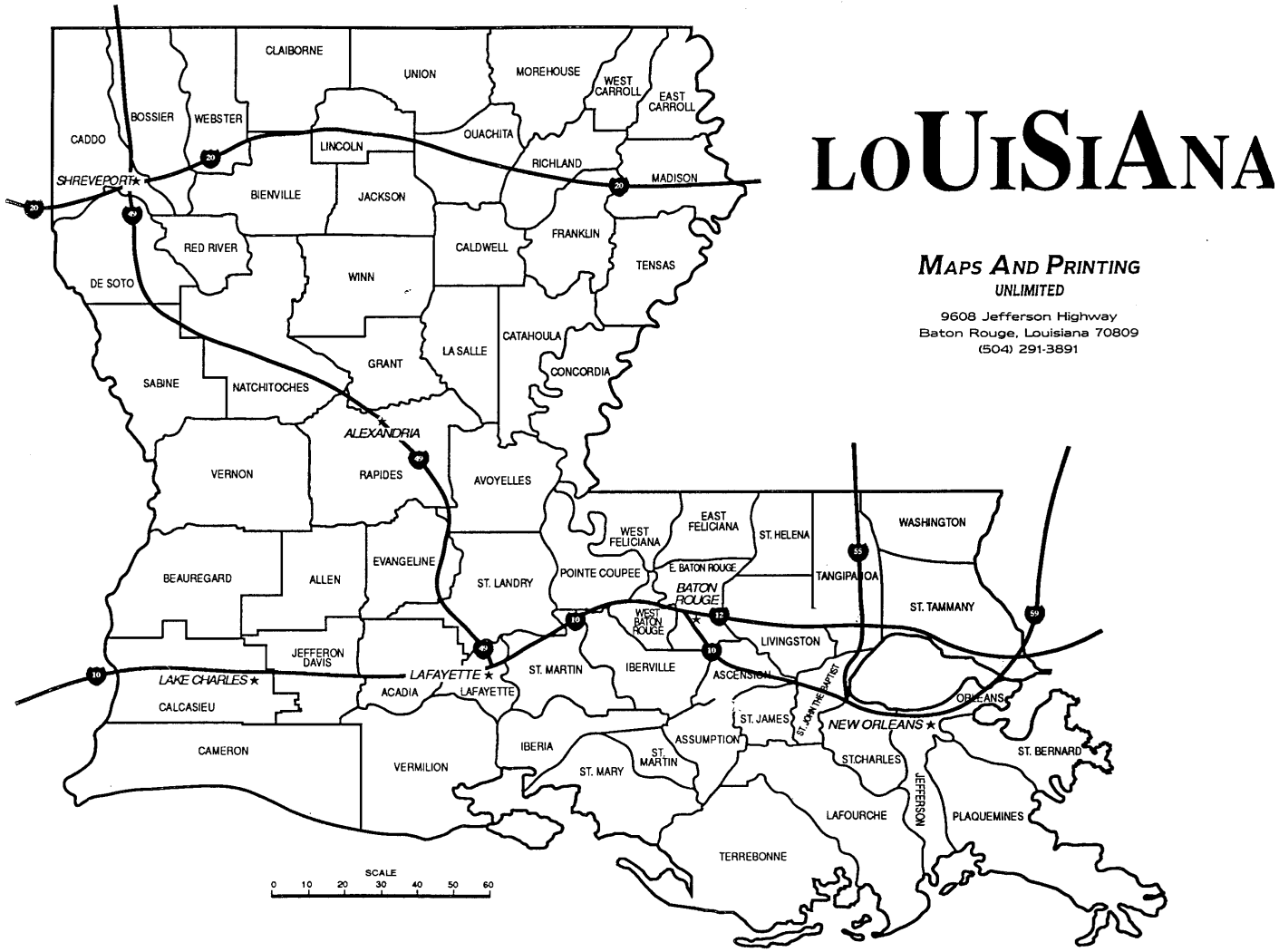


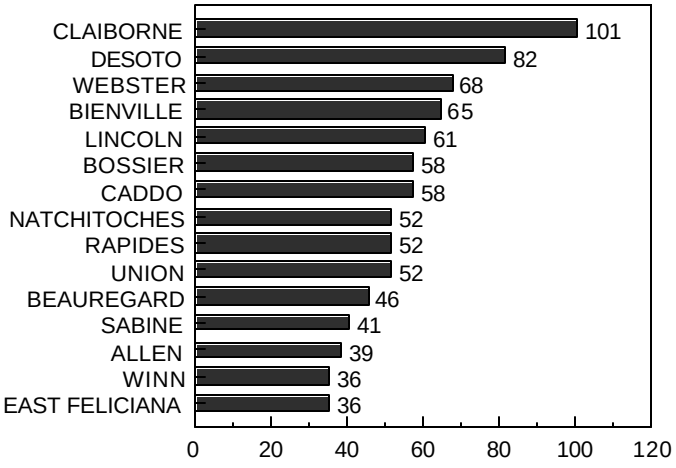
Figure 2.

Figure 3. Respondent Forestland Ownership by Parish

Top 15 Parishes Where Respondents Have Forestland

(n=1,505 responses)

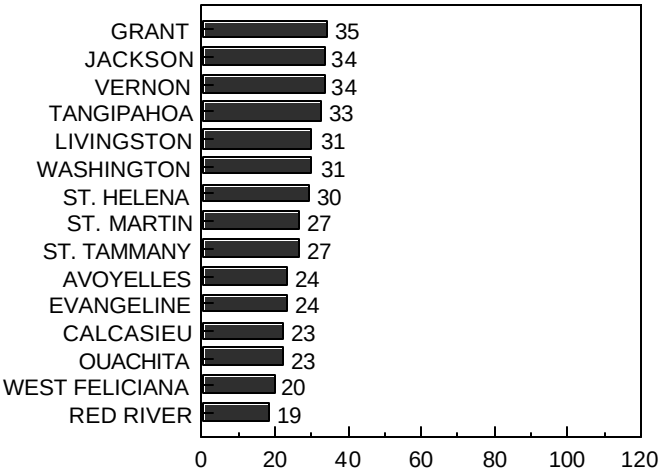
Number of Responses---Multiple Responses Possible



2nd Set of 15 Parishes Where Respondents Have Forestland

(n=1,505 responses)

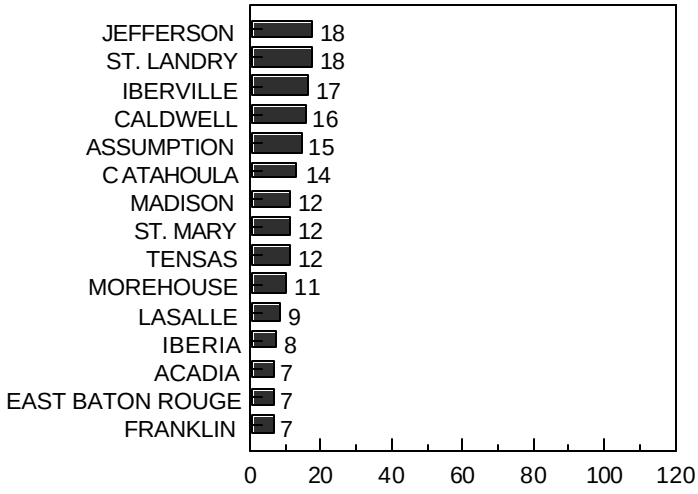
Number of Responses---Multiple Responses Possible



3rd Set of 15 Parishes Where Respondents Have Forestland

(n=1,505 responses)

Number of Responses---Multiple Responses Possible



Bottom 15 Parishes Where Respondents Have Forestland

(n=1,505 responses)

Number of Responses---Multiple Responses Possible

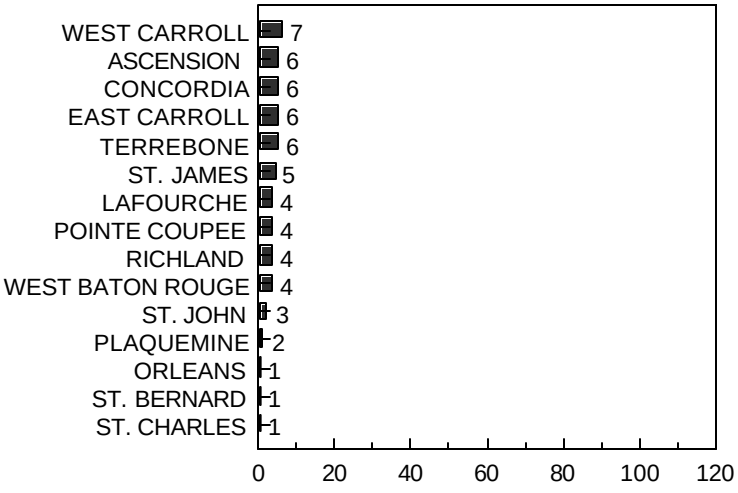
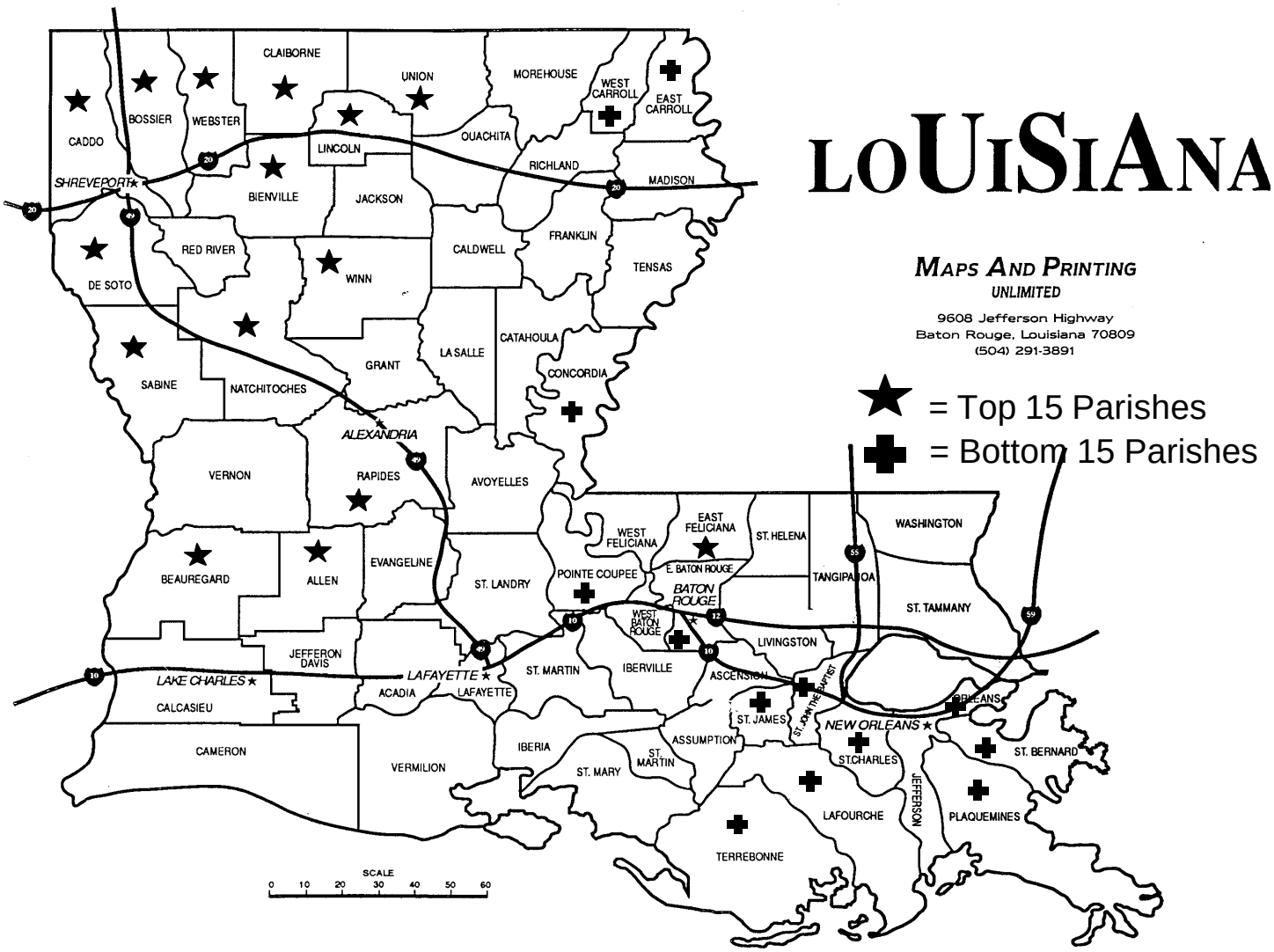


Figure 4. Top 15 and Bottom 15 Parishes by Respondent Ownership



Respondent Demographics

Gender (n=838)

221 respondents (26.4%) are female and 613 (73.2%) are male.

Residency (n=887)

653 (73.6%) of respondents are Louisiana residents and 232 (26.2%) are non-resident absentee landowners.

Age (n=895)

Table 1. Respondent Age Classes

Age Class	Frequency	Percent
Under 25	1	.1
25-34	12	1.3
35-44	65	7.3
45-54	148	16.5
55-64	217	24.2
65 and older	452	50.5

Income (n=759)

Table 2. Respondent Income Classes

Income Class	Frequency	Percent
LESS THAN $10,000	19	2.5
$10,000 TO $19,999	33	4.3
$20,000 TO $29,999	53	7.0
$30,000 TO $39,999	64	8.4
$40,000 TO $49,999	55	7.2
$50,000 TO $59,999	56	7.4
$60,000 TO $74,999	94	12.4
$75,000 TO $99,999	97	12.8
OVER $100,000	288	37.9

Marital Status (n=858)

Table 3. Respondent Marital Status

Status Class	Frequency	Percent
Never married	33	3.8
Divorced or separated	53	6.2
Widowed	108	12.6
Married or living with partner	664	77.4

Education (n=861)

Table 4. Respondent Education Class

Education Class	Frequency	Percent
Some high school or less	32	3.7
High school graduate	117	13.6
Some college	168	19.5
College graduate (B.A./B.S.)	327	38.0
Graduate degree (M.S./Ph.D.)	217	25.2

Membership in an Environmental Organizaton (n=851)

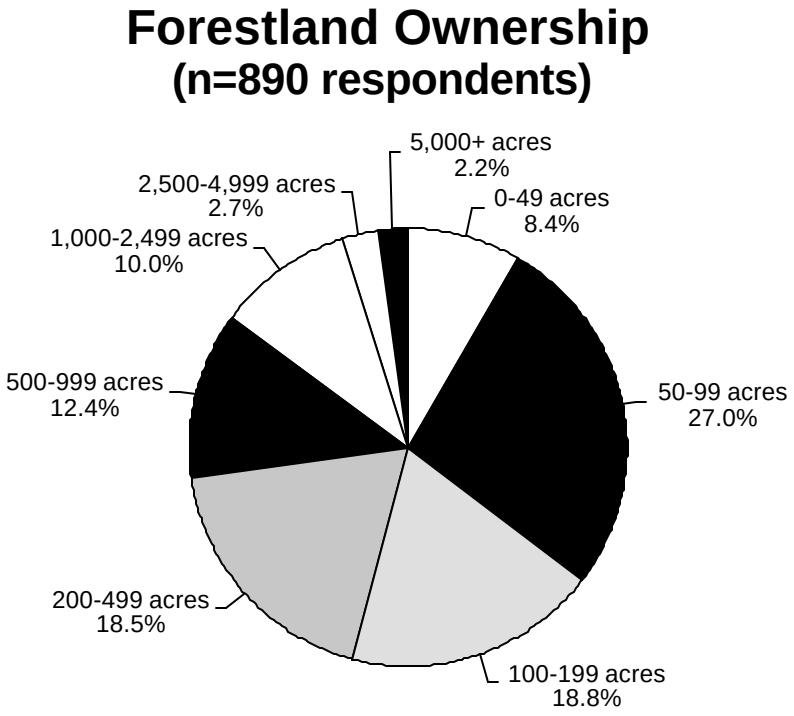
Respondents were asked “Are you a member of any organization whose primary mission is to protect the environment?” 86 (10.1%) said they were members of such organizations and 756 (89.9%) said no.

III. TIMBERLAND OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Forestland Ownership

Average ownership for all respondents is 760 acres. As seen in Figure 5, 54 percent of respondents own less than 200 acres while 15 percent own 1,000 acres or more.

Figure 5.



On average, respondents acquired 112 acres over the past 10 years and sold an average of 33 acres over the same time period. This equals a total acquisition of 103,094 acres and 29,157 acres sold.

781 respondents (85.5 percent) have harvested timber from their lands with 80.3 percent stating that the harvest was to produce wood products for sale. Of those that plan to harvest timber in the future, over the next ten years, 10.5 percent of respondents said they plan to

harvest timber for tyheir own use, 46 percent said they would do so to sell wood products and 9.2 percent said they will harvest for both personal use and for sale (Table 5). 83.7 percent said that they plan to harvest timber for wood products sales at some future date beyond 10 years while 6 percent respondents said they did not plan to harvest at all.

Table 5. Respondent Harvest Intentions - Percent of Respondents

Harvest Time Frame	Harvest Own Wood For Own Use (percent)	Harvest Wood for Sale (percent)	Harvest for Use & Sale (percent)
In the next 10 years N=524	10.5%	45.9%	9.2%
Possibly at some future date N=355	6.5%	83.7%	9.9%
Never plan to harvest N=57-----6% of respondents			

Ownership Motivations

The majority of respondents said the number one reason to own forestland is for timber production (Figure 6). This is followed by the desire for a future estate for their families, as a land investment, and for recreational purposes (hunting, fishing, hiking).

Figure 6. Reasons to Own Timberland – Number of #1 Responses

Harvesting and Management

29.3 percent of respondents (262 respondents) said they had a written forestry management plan for the property. Of this group, 87.4 percent said that the plan was prepared by consulting foresters or other forestry professionals beside themselves. Of the total 889 respondents, two-thirds said that they have sought the forestry management advice or assistance in the past.

Products Harvested

For the 85.5 percent of respondents that said they have harvested timber from their land, the primary products sold are sawlogs, pulpwood and fuelwood for their own use. (Figure 7).

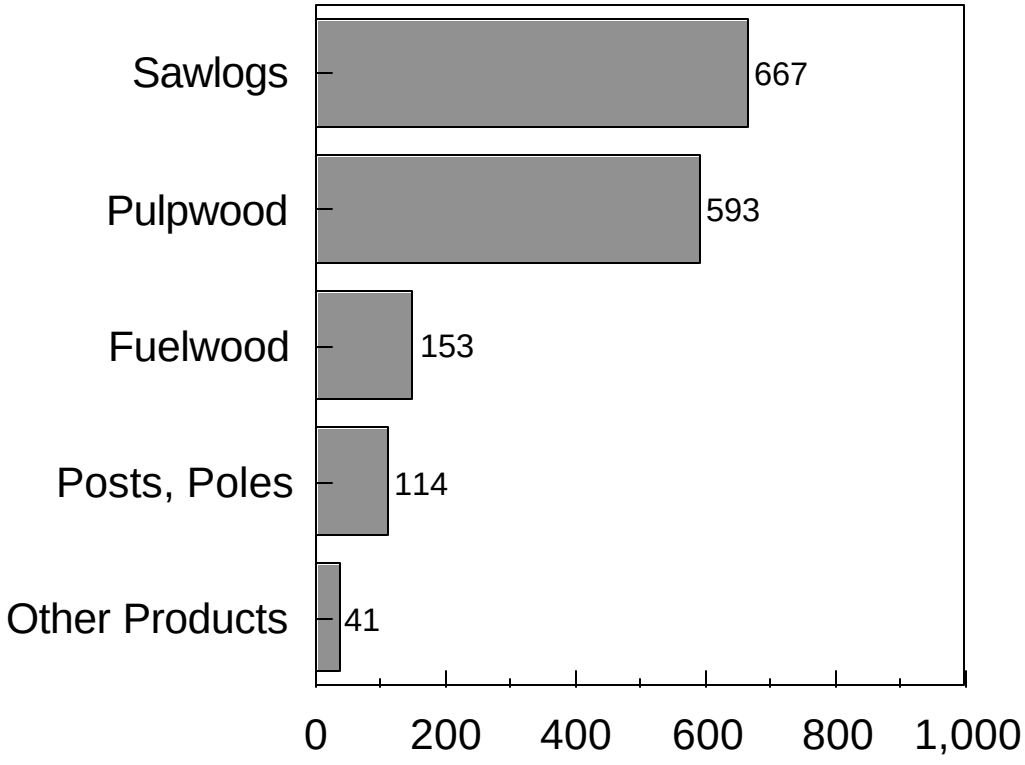


Figure 7. Products Harvested – Number of Respondents

IV. GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOTIVATIONS

Before delving into certification issues, a set of questions on general environmental awareness and Inclination were posed to respondents (Table 6). Although all mean scores are fairly high, only 20 percent of respondents strongly agree that they would pay more for environmentally friendly products and only 18 percent strongly agree that environmental information in packaging can be trusted. Nearly fifty percent of respondents strongly believe there is much corporations can do to improve the environment while this figure was 52.9 percent with regard to the ability for individuals to improve the environment.

Table 6. General Environmental Motivations

5-Point Scale Key

1=Strongly Disagree; 3=Neither Disagree Nor Agree; 5= Strongly Agree

	Percent of Responses					
Question	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Mean**
Whenever possible, I buy products which I consider environmentally safe. (n=882)	2.4%	4.5%	27.4%	26.8%	38.9%	4.0
I would pay more for environmentally friendly products. (n=872)	6.4%	10.9%	33.5%	28.8%	20.4%	3.5
I believe that environmental information on packaging is important. (n=879)	4.6%	7.8%	21.2%	30.0%	36.4%	3.9
I generally believe environmental information on packaging. (n=874	4.7%	9.4%	30.7%	37.5%	17.7%	3.5
I believe there is much corporations can do to improve the environment. (n=886)	3.5%	5.3%	13.9%	29.0%	48.3%	4.1
I believe there is much individuals can do to improve the environment. (n=890)	3.5%	4.4%	10.1%	29.0%	52.9%	4.3

V. CERTIFICATION ISSUES

Certification of Public and Private Forestland

Beyond general environmental attitudes and activities, it is important to gauge respondent perceptions of environmental certification with regard to different forestland ownerships. As seen in Table 7, respondents, on average moderately agree that certification is necessary on federal, state and tropical forests. The lowest level of agreement is with regard to certification on private forestland, incidentally the ownership of respondents.

Table 7. Rating of the Need for Certification of Timber Harvesting & Management for Different Ownerships

5-Point Scale Key

1=Strongly Disagree; 3=Neither Disagree Nor Agree; 5= Strongly Agree

	Percent of Responses					
Ownership Type	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Mean**
U.S. public forests (National Forests, BLM) (n=874)	10.6%	6.2%	23.7%	20.6%	38.9%	3.7
State forests (n=878)	9.3%	7.2%	23.3%	22.1%	38.0%	3.7
U.S. private forests (n=870)	20.9%	10.6%	29.4%	17.7%	21.4%	3.1
Tropical forests (n=859)	9.0%	5.6%	26.7%	19.0%	39.8%	3.8

In addition to the overall need for certification on various forestland ownerships, respondents were asked to evaluate whether certification can help sustaining the health of forests on of these different ownerships (Table 8). The pattern of responses is almost identical to the responses on the need for certification. Again, the lowest level of agreement is with regard to the ability of certification to sustain forest health on private forestland and highest for federal, state and tropical forests.

Table 8. Rating of the Perception that Certification Can Sustain the Health of Different Ownerships

5-Point Scale Key

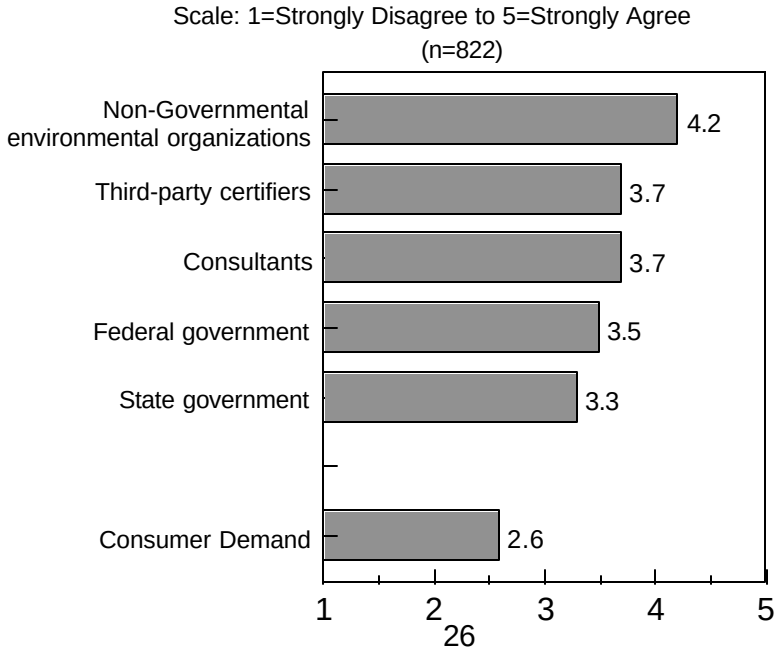
1=Strongly Disagree; 3=Neither Disagree Nor Agree; 5= Strongly Agree

Ownership Type	Percent of Responses 1	2	3	4	5	Mean
U.S. public forests (National Forests, BLM) (n=862)	9.4%	6.0%	26.9%	22.7%	34.9%	3.7
State forests (n=862)	8.8%	6.3%	28.0%	23.4%	33.5%	3.7
U.S. private forests (n=860)	14.5%	7.1%	32.1%	20.1%	26.0%	3.1
Tropical forests (n=846)	8.5%	5.0%	29.8%	21.6%	35.1%	3.7

Perceived Impetus for Certification

It is often difficult to discern the impetus is for certification. Is it being driven from the marketplace from consumer demand or is it from the certifiers themselves? As seen in Figure 8, respondents believe that certification is being promulgated primarily from non-governmental environmental organizations (NGOs). This group is followed by the third-party certifiers themselves and consultants that stand to benefit from certification activities. Consumer demand ranked last and is the only choice ranked below neutral or 3.0 on a 5-point scale of agreement.

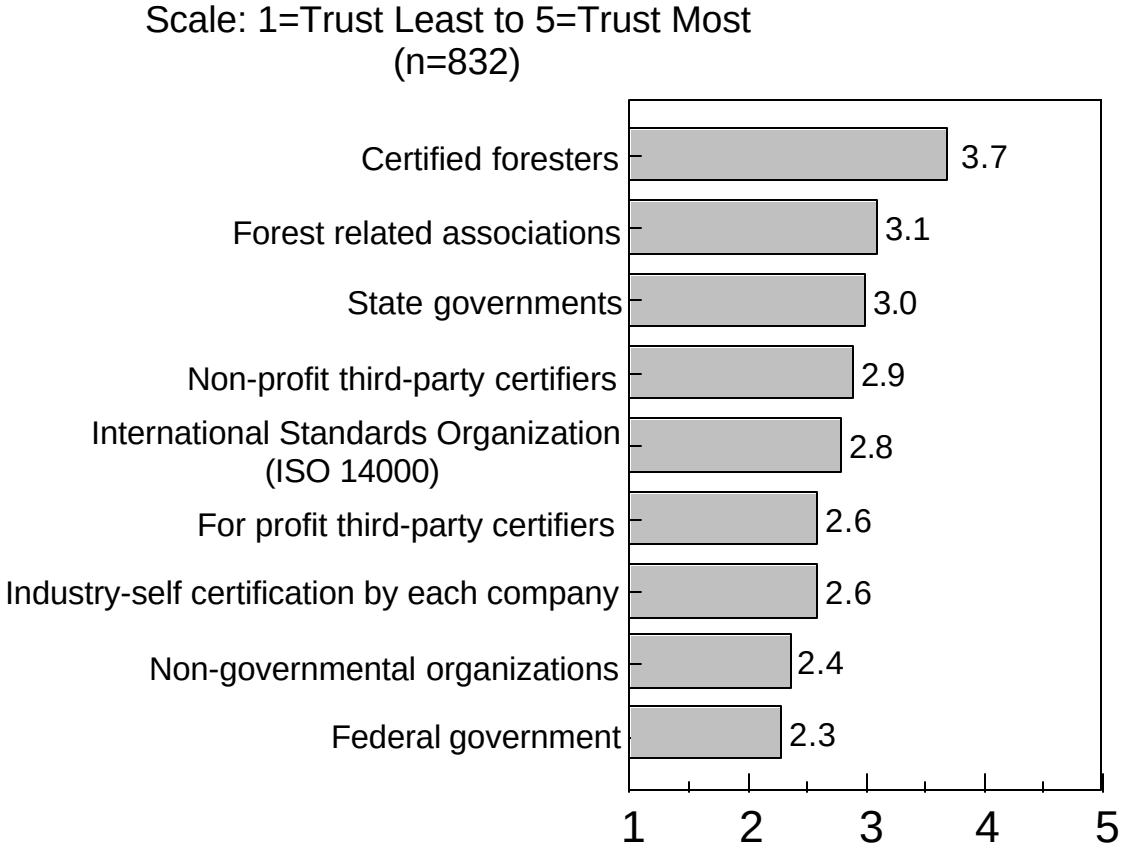
Figure 8. The Impetus for Certification in the United States



Level of Trust to Certify Forest Management and Harvesting

One issue specific to environmental certification is to discern which organizations respondents would trust to certify forest management and harvesting. Respondents were asked to evaluate their level of trust in a number of entities including the federal government, self-regulation by the forest products industry, non-government environmental organizations (NGOs) and third-party certifiers. As seen in Figure 9, the only entity that respondents trust is certified foresters (rated 3.7 on a 5-point scale of trust). The only other entity rated above neutral (3.0 on a 5-point scale) are forest-related associations, so-called second-party certifiers. Ranked last is the federal government.

Figure 9. Level of Trust to Implement and Monitor Certification



Certification Issues

Figure 10 shows the results of three sets of matched questions relating to general certification issues. The first set looks at desired and actual levels of involvement of the forestry community in the certification process. The figure indicates that there is a wide gap between the need to be involved and actual involvement. For example, 56 percent of respondents somewhat agree or strongly agree that such involvement should take place. However, on 16 percent agree that the forestry community has been adequately involved in the certification discussion.

The second section of the figure poses the question of whether certification is a potentially viable mechanism to aid in promoting sustainable forestry in the US. Forty-one percent of respondents somewhat agree or strongly agree that this is the case. But, they are neutral on the question whether certification can reduce the need for additional forest management regulation with a mean of 3.0 on a 5-point scale of agreement.

The third section of Figure 10 looks at certification and the general public. The first question asks whether certification programs can provide a vehicle for the forest community to communicate positive accomplishments to the public. Nearly half of respondents agreed with this statement and only 12 percent disagreeing. Once again, the flip side of this question, the public's willingness to support certification is called into question. Fifty-six percent of respondents question the willingness of the public to support certification.

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree
(n=832)

The US forestry community should be involved in the certification discussion. (3.6/5.0)

Disagree or Strongly Disagree = 12%
Agree or Strongly Agree = 56%

The US forestry community has been adequately involved in the certification discussion. (3.0/5.0)

Disagree or Strongly Disagree = 13%
Agree or Strongly Agree = 16%

Figure 10. General Certification Issues

Certification is a potentially viable mechanism to aid in promoting sustainable forestry in the US. (3.3/5.0)

Disagree or Strongly Disagree = 18%
Agree or Strongly Agree = 41%

Certification could reduce the need for additional forest management regulation. (3.0/5.0)

Disagree or Strongly Disagree = 24%
Agree or Strongly Agree = 26%

Certification programs can provide a vehicle for the forest community to communicate positive accomplishments to the public. (3.4/5.0)

Disagree or Strongly Disagree = 12%
Agree or Strongly Agree = 46%

I question the willingness of the public to support certification. (3.7/5.0)

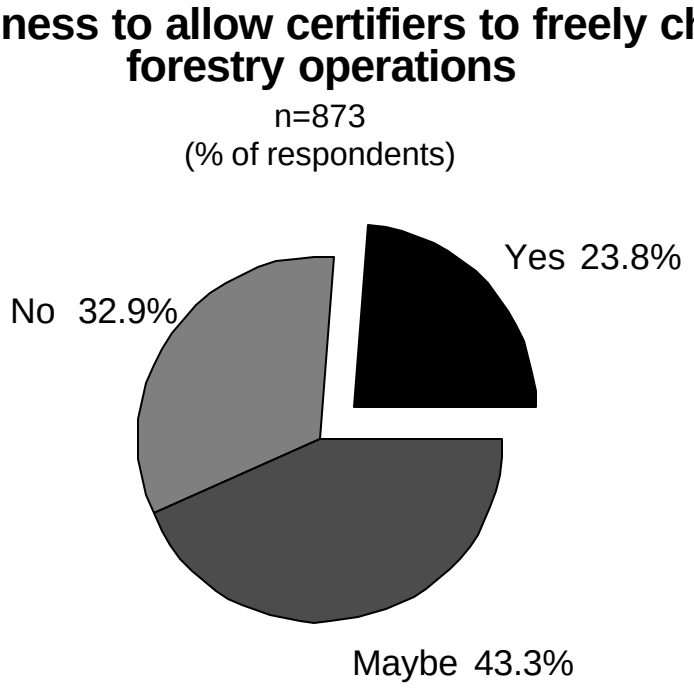
Disagree or Strongly Disagree = 8%
Agree or Strongly Agree = 56%

Willingness to Pay for Certified Wood Products

The key driver for suppliers to produce or distribute environmentally certified wood products is the willingness of customers to pay a premium to offset implementation costs. Similarly, the ability to receive an upcharge from downstream customers, primarily consumers, is another driver of corporate certification involvement. In this study, respondents were asked if they believed consumers would, in fact, pay a premium for certified forest products. Only 13.5 percent strongly agreed that this would be the case with 17 percent somewhat agreeing. Thirty-seven percent somewhat or strongly disagreed.

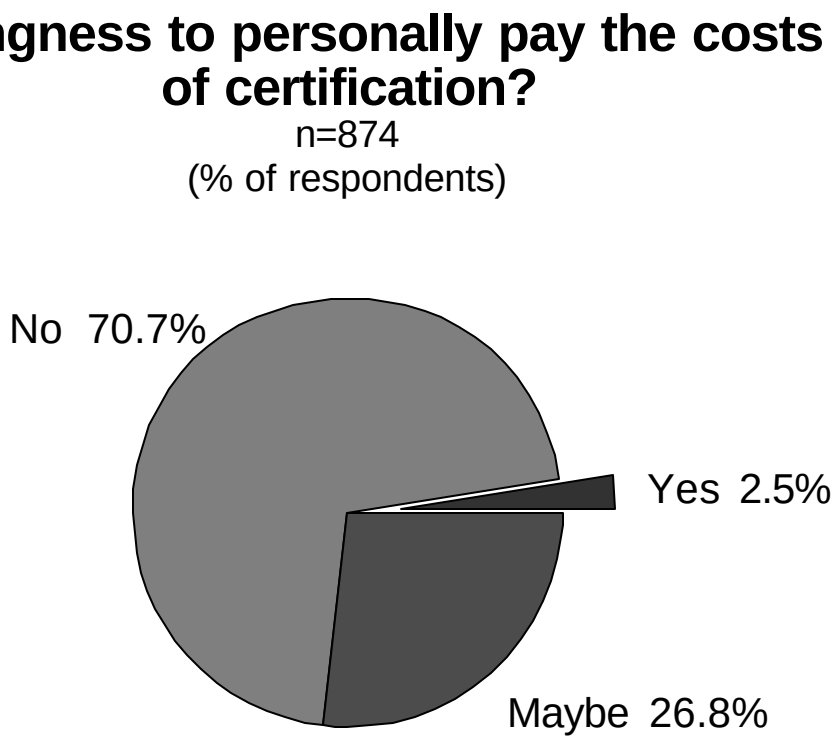
Figure 11 indicates that respondents are generally not averse to having certifiers check their forestry operations. There is a high level in self-confidence that they are "doing the right thing" and have nothing to hide.

Figure 11.



However, a willingness to pay for certification is glaringly lacking (Figure 12). Only 2.5 percent of respondents said they would pay for the cost to certify their forestland.

Figure 12.

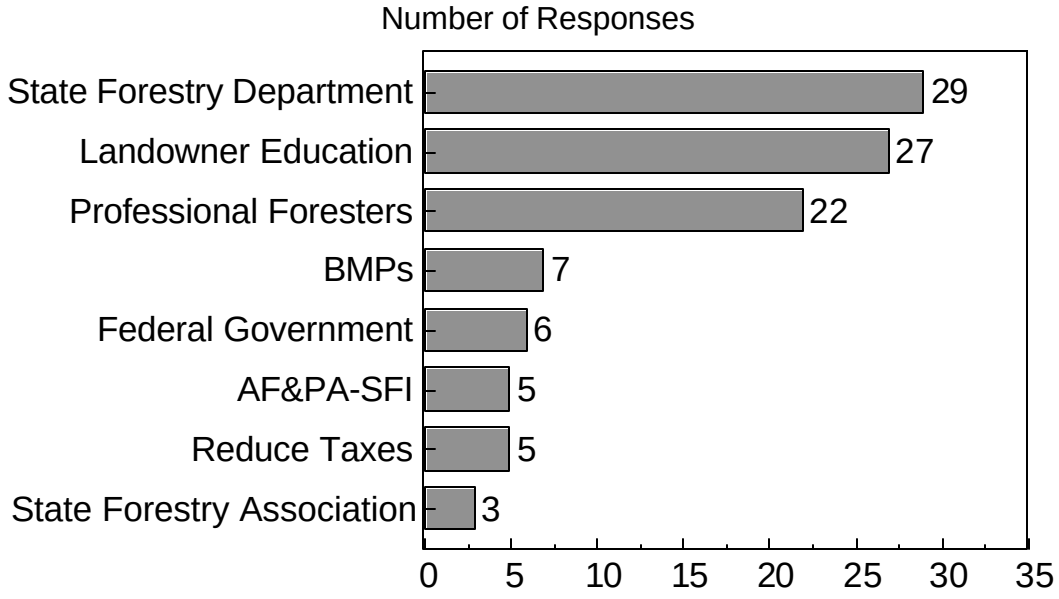


Suggested Alternatives to Third-Party Certification

The last question posed to respondents was an open-ended question and asked if they had suggestions as to what might be viable alternatives to third-party certification of non-industrial private forestlands. There were 320 responses of which 198 said certification was not necessary in any form, 16 said they were not informed enough to discuss alternatives and 104 offered comments regarding alternatives The complete list of comments can be found in Appendix II. Figure 13 summarizes the frequency of responses.

Three suggestions comprise 75 percent of the suggested alternatives. The first is having the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) be the certifying agency. The point here is that respondents felt that adherence to state guidelines is sufficient and that monitoring by the LDAF would be useful. The second alternative is to better educate the NIPF owner on management and harvesting practices which they would follow. The third significant suggested alternative is to have professional foresters certify NIPF lands. This is consistent with the high level of trust that respondents have in professional foresters, discussed earlier in this report.

Figure 13. Suggested Alternatives to Third-Party Certification



VI. LITERATURE REVIEW[1]

Consumers are increasingly becoming interested in the environmental impacts caused by the production, packaging, and disposal of the products they purchase and consume. Recycled paper products, organic vegetables, non-toxic cleaners and detergents and other "environmentally friendly" products are now available in most supermarkets. Some of these products have begun to be certified by independent organizations that assess the environmental claims made by the manufacturers. This stamp of certification tells the consumer that the product has met a set of standards that designate it as an environmentally friendly product.

Environmental certification of forest products and forestry practices, part of the more encompassing green movement, is proliferating globally. For example, Canada is examining certifying sustainable forest management and harvesting practices of all Provincial land. European nations, many with long histories of environmental activism, also appear to be moving toward environmental certification of their forests as well as using certification in purchasing decisions. In addition, the Canadian government has expressed concern over international pressures for certification of forest management and labeling of wood products because of the importance of the timber industry to the Canadian economy. As a result, the government has initiated a process to develop national standards for certification, which would be linked to the International Standards Organization program.

In response to these environmental concerns, some environmental organizations, retailers and wood products companies have developed a set of standards for wood products that are intended to encourage consumers to purchase wood originating from certified sustainable forests. These efforts are a response to the perception by the general public that most forest practices involving the harvesting of wood do irreversible damage to

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1 In Part From: Ozanne, Lucie K. and R. P. Vlosky. 1996. *"Wood Products Environmental Certification: The United States Perspective."* The Forestry Chronicle. (Canada) 72(2):157-165.

the environment (Peterson 1994). The theory behind this movement is that consumers need to be assured by a neutral third-party that a forest products company is employing sound practices that will ensure a sustainable forest. It is believed that those companies who can prove themselves environmentally responsible will benefit by differentiating their products and thus increasing their share of the marketplace.

This section reviews the state of environmental certification in the wood products industry in the United States. It covers such topics as: the growth of this issue; the goals of certification; the certifying organizations and their programs; the costs of certification; the current problems with certification; the role of governments in this issue; the perspective of the wood products industry; and the future of wood products environmental certification.

Environmental Product Certification

Environmental product certification arose out of consumer demands for more "environmentally friendly" products as well as consumer confusion and distrust of environmental claims being made by product manufacturers. For example, the 1980's saw a revival of environmental consciousness among consumers in America, with 53% of those surveyed saying they had decided not to buy a product during the previous year because they were worried about its effect on the environment (Caincross 1992). Also, research has shown that consumers are confused by "green" symbols used by manufacturers (e.g. the recycling symbol), whether symbols refer to the actual product or its packaging, and the terms used by manufacturers in environmental labeling (e.g. biodegradable, ozone friendly, pre-consumer and post-consumer). It has been suggested that this confusion can be attributed to several factors (Kangun, Carlson, and Grove 1991). First, the terms used in environmental advertising are used by different companies to promote different environmental meanings. Also, the knowledge required to understand the environmental information in product promotion and advertising is often complicated and can be subject to change. Finally, comparisons between products are frequently limited to one environmental benefit and not the complete life cycle of the product, which can create confusion for consumers. In fact, Kangun et al. (1991) found that 58% of the environmental

advertisements examined in their study contained at least one misleading or deceptive claim.

In addition to confusion, consumers are often suspicious of manufacturer advertising and product claims, environmental or otherwise (Coddington 1993). This skepticism has arisen out of conflicting information provided by manufacturers and from several cases of environmental or green fraud. For example, the well publicized case of Hefty "Degradable" Trash Bags which were misadvertised by Mobil Chemical Company as environmentally superior to other trash bags on the market.

Thus, environmental certification programs exist to allow credible, third party organizations to pass judgment on the environmental performance of products and packages, rather than leave assertions to product manufacturers themselves (Coddington 1993). These programs have been developed to overcome the problems of consumer confusion and distrust by providing consumers with important environmental information, which is documented and verified by an independent certifying organization. Environmental certification began in West Germany in 1977 with the Blue Angel program, which now certifies over 3,000 products in 57 countries. In general, third party certification provides information to consumers on six distinct environmental areas: raw materials consumption; energy consumption; emissions into air; emissions into water; solid-waste generation; and indirect resource consumption or impact (e.g. destruction of wildlife habitat, species preservation) (Coddington 1993). In essence, certification exists as a method of reducing consumer anxiety or cognitive dissonance regarding the environmental impact of the products consumers purchase and consume.

Certification labels can be issued by first-, second-, or third-party certification organizations (Cabarle et al. 1995). First-party claims are those made by producers about the environmental attributes of their own products. Second-party claims are endorsements by trade associations or similar affiliates with a vested, financial interest in the producer's competitiveness. Third-party claims are backed by independent entities that issue labels based on objective assessments.

Global Wood Product Certification Overview

Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and many countries signing on to the UNCED Forestry Principles, a number of regional efforts have been undertaken to influence forest policy, forest management, and trade in forest products. For example, in June of 1993, the United States declared its commitment to a national goal of achieving sustainable management of US forest by the year 2000 at the Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (the Helsinki Process) (Anonymous 1995; Fox 1995). Apparently through the Helsinki Process, European countries have developed and reached a pan-European consensus on the definition and characteristics of sustainable forest management, which has long been a difficult and contentious issue. Also, the Process by identifying criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management will enable these countries to measure progress toward that goal. Thus, European countries intend to be able to demonstrate that on a national level specific countries are sustainably managing their forestlands (Anonymous 1995).

In a parallel effort, the United States, Canada, Russia, Japan, Chile, China, Korea, New Zealand, and Australia are involved in the Montreal Process to develop consensus criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management (Fox 1995). Again the purpose of this international effort is to provide a method to describe and measure national progress toward the goals of Agenda 21, adopted by the UNCED, held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992.

While these parallel efforts to establish acceptable criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management continue, their products are not the same. There has been some discussion about the need to harmonize the various lists and perhaps to develop a global list of criteria and indicators of sustainable management for all types of forests. “However, none of the regional participants want a global effort to negate their work (Anonymous 1995).” Also, although the concept of certification of sustainability is very much on the international agenda for discussion and debate, many governments have not

adopted formal positions on timber certification. Thus a consensus position at the international level has also not been reached.

U.S. Wood Products Environmental Certification

Wood products environmental certification has been identified by an American Forest & Paper Association (AFPA) task force as one of the top issues facing the industry (Anonymous 1994a). The Society of American Foresters (SAF) conducted a study to explore certification both on a national and international level. Their study suggests that while the primary objectives of certification may vary, they generally will include one or more of the following goals: (1) to increase general consumer awareness of the relationship of the forest industry to the environment; (2) to increase consumer acceptance and confidence; (3) to modify consumer behavior; (4) to modify manufacturer behavior; (5) to improve the earth's environmental quality; (6) to increase market share; (7) to provide product differentiation; (8) to provide an objective audit of the management of the forest asset; (9) to promote sustainable forest management; and (10) to demonstrate that forest management provides sustainable economic, ecological and social benefits (Anonymous 1995).

Currently there are eight independent organizations, which maintain wood products certification programs in the United States (see Table 2), and several similar programs outside the United States (e.g. United Kingdom, Germany, and Australia). As an example, the Rainforest Alliance's "Smartwood" program certifies all sources of timber including natural forests, plantations, large commercial concessions and small community forestry projects (Anonymous 1991). Under their program, sources of timber are evaluated on a case-by-case basis using criteria based on the following broad criteria: (1) maintenance of environmental functions, including watershed stability and erosion control; (2) sustained yield of production of both wood products and other forest products; and (3) a positive impact on the well being of local communities. Also, comprehensive forest management plans must be developed and followed and there must exist long-term security for the forest (Fox 1995).

Table 9. Certification Organizations in the United States.

Ecoforestry Institute 607 S.E. 15th Avenue Portland, OR 97214	Institute for Sustainable Forestry P.O. Box 1580 Redway, CA 95660
The Forest Partnership 431 Pine Street Burlington, VT 05401	Rainforest Alliance 65 Bleeker Street New York, NY 10012
The Forest Trust P.O. Box 519 Santa Fe, NM 87504	Rogue Institute for Ecology and Economy P.O Box 3213 Ashland, OR 97520
Global Resource Consultants 9501 Lomond Drive Manassas, VA 22110	Scientific Certification Systems 1611 Telegraph Ave., Suite 1111 Oakland, CA 94612

Source: Winterhalter (1994)

Another program, the Scientific Certification Systems' (SCS) Forest Conservation Program involves in-depth evaluation of specific timber harvesting operations on three program elements: (1) timber resource sustainability; (2) forest ecosystem health and maintenance; and (3) financial and socioeconomic sustainability. As explained by Debbie Hammel, SCS Director of Forestry Programs, fundamental to this process is the evaluation of management practices against objective and regionally appropriate principles of sustainable forestry. This evaluation is usually conducted by a three-person interdisciplinary expert team composed of a forester, an ecologist or wildlife biologist, and an economist (Seymour, Hrubes, and Hammel 1995). This team conducts on-site inspections, reviews the forest management plan, and conducts interviews with employees and local residents (Fox 1995). After the team has completed its evaluation, the report undergoes client review, for technical accuracy, followed by peer review from at least two appropriate independent experts. The program also calls for ongoing, periodic monitoring to assure continued adherence to management plans and practices, and to assure adequate tracking of the "chain-of-custody" of products from certified operations (i.e. from the forest to the retailer and to the final consumer).

SCS and the Rainforest Alliance have certified the majority of forestry operations throughout the world. However, currently only about 0.5 percent of internationally traded forest products are certified (Baharuddin and Simula 1994).

Wood Product Certification Issues

Many criticisms have been leveled against the use of wood products certification programs by both the wood products industry and its associated trade associations. First, although research has shown that consumers believe that North American forests are not being managed for sustainability, and that they would trust a label that assures wood resource sustainability (Winterhalter and Cassens 1993), critics do not believe that sufficient consumer demand exists for certified wood products. For instance, Waffle (1994) asks, " ...has a real market for 'certified sustainably produced' timber been demonstrated?" In fact two willingness to pay studies have found that there is a consumer demand for certified wood products. A WWF study found that consumers say they are willing to pay 13.6% more on average for wood products originating from sustainable sources (Read 1991). Another study found that 19% of educated consumers with relatively high incomes claim they are willing to pay more for certified wood products (Winterhalter and Cassens 1993). However, critics contend that these types of willingness-to-pay studies do not tell us what consumers in reality will pay (McKillop 1992).

According to the Society of American Foresters Study Group Report (Anonymous 1995), certification tends to suffer from one major weakness, it is not always clear who is providing the information and what standards are being used to assess the claims. Because of this problem, various interest groups have called for the establishment of an accreditor for certifying organizations. Through an international alliance of stakeholder groups, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) was produced in 1994, and has since opened an international secretariat in Mexico to begin evaluating certifiers for accreditation. Thus the FSC is an international, non-profit, nongovernmental organization which was established for the purpose of evaluating, accrediting and monitoring certifying organizations, such as the Rainforest Alliance and SCS (Anonymous 1994b). The FSC

does not itself certify forest products, but it provides a mechanism for recognizing forest stewardship through their Principles of Good Forest Management (Winterhalter 1994).

Others question the feasibility of maintaining an audit trail for sustainably certified wood products. For instance, Susan Perry of the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association explains that, "many of the wood products in our industry are custom made of many woods often by larger, higher-value manufacturers. Therefore, to supply country-of-origin information on every individual piece is virtually unachievable (Anonymous 1992)." In the same article, Wendy Baer of the International Hardwood Products Association explains that because most wood products contain a variety of woods, and the methods by which products are processed after import would make accurate labeling virtually impossible (Anonymous 1992). Waffle (1994) notes that although some small-scale natural forest operations have been certified, there is no evidence that third-party certification programs are practical in larger-scale natural forest systems. He concludes that certification will have little effect on deforestation in the tropics, and that certification is unnecessary in temperate forests because of strict timber-cutting regulations, which already exist.

An important issue, which has received little attention, is the imbalance between developing and developed countries in the structuring of certification programs. At present, almost all certifiers are based in developed countries while most of the operations they have certified are in tropical, developing countries. Some fear that this Northern domination will fuel the arguments of those who see certification as a threat to developing countries and thus undermine the efforts of those who consider certification to be a catalyst for change (Viana 1994).

Some believe that consumer satisfaction and trust in certification programs are jeopardized by the fragmentation of the certifying business itself (Mater 1995). Smart Wood, Green Cross, Good Wood and other symbols may confront any consumer who wishes to purchase a green wood product. The sheer number of certification organizations, the diversity of their programs and the complexity of information provided by

certification may serve to confuse consumers which is the very issue certification is attempting to address.

Buckley (1994) poses several additional questions regarding the United States' hardwood resource and certification programs. First, can an industry that sources logs from up to 4 million owners of forest land really certify that resource? How many certificates should or can be applied to one product, which for examples uses solid wood, veneer, and panel products in its construction? Finally, he asks how competent are the entities that monitor and certify the certification agencies (i.e. the FSC)?

Costs of Certification

According to Cabarle et al. (1995), the costs of certifying a forest management operation can be divided into three general categories. First, the incremental cost of improving forest management over current practices at the management unit level to meet certification standards. These costs may include lower yields, higher opportunity costs, and different distribution of costs and benefits over time (Bach and Gram 1993). Lower yields are often necessary to match harvest levels to the rate of annual growth and to reduce the damage to residual timber and non-timber goods and services. This may be partially compensated by lower operating costs and increased recovery from better planning and better protection of valuable non-timber products.

Next, the costs of certification include the actual cost of the certification assessment or audit and follow-up inspections. "The costs of certification assessments have been estimated by local specialists to be between $.30 and $1.00 per hectare per year in tropical countries. In the United States, costs may range from $.05 to several dollars/ha/year, with substantial economies of scale (Cabarle et al. 1995)."

Finally, the costs include those of identifying and monitoring the chain of custody. The purpose of maintaining a chain-of-custody is to ensure that the product bearing a label of environmental certification is, in fact, produced from certified sources or materials. To

monitor the chain-of-custody some of the procedures which would need to be followed include the following: 1) all logs must bear a tag identifying the forest of origin; 2) all certified logs must be segregated in the log yard from non-certified logs; 3) until and unless automated coding mechanisms are employed, only certified logs may be run within a single production shift; 4) upon arrival at a secondary mill, all certified lumber must be segregated from non-certified lumber; etc. Ozanne and Vlosky (1995) have suggested that through the use of a Certification Information System (CIS) certified wood products may be accurately tracked through all levels of manufacturing and distribution and ultimately to the final consumer. However, they estimate the total cost of this system throughout the channel to be approximately $130,000 for hardware and software alone. Some have suggested that the savings from improved inventory control in the supply line under a certification information system will more than offset its cost (Miller 1994, in Cabarle et al. 1995), and some companies may have already implemented many elements of the system which would reduce these costs (e.g. bar coding and electronic data interchange).

The United States Industry Perspective

In general the wood products industry and its associated trade organizations have been quite negative towards the environmental certification of forest management and forest products. Many feel that the industry is already heavily regulated and thus interference from outside groups is unwarranted. "The forest products industry remains skeptical about industry 'outsiders' determining what is good forest practice (Lober and Eisen 1995)." Because of existing regulation and the self-interested wise management of forest resources, the industry suggests that forests, at least in the developed world, are already being well managed.

In this section, we discuss two U.S. companies, a land management company and a large retail home center, who represent a proactive attempt to embrace environmental certification. We then discuss the more reactive and often unsupportive position typical of

the forest products industry, some of the strategies that industry have developed to counteract this trend.

Positive Responses to Certification

Seven Islands Land Company

Seven Islands Land Company manages approximately one million acres of forestland in Maine. These lands constitute the largest, longest held, family ownership in North America (McNulty and Cashwell 1995). During the 155 years of family ownership, the forest management, which has been practiced, has been less intensive than many industrial forest holdings. For instance, management relies heavily on the use of partial harvest, selection and shelterwood systems, and natural regeneration. McNulty and Cashwell (1995) suggest the nature of Seven Islands program is consistent with current concepts of sustainability.

Seven Islands initially envisioned environmental certification as a marketing tool, a means to improve the return to the owners as harvest levels approached maximum sustainable levels. "Forest products from this ownership could be targeted toward niche markets (McNulty and Cashwell 1995)." They envisioned that an environmental labeling system would help differentiation their products and move them from a commodity perspective to producing specialty forest products. Also, they saw certification as a method of protecting themselves from the environmental scrutinization of environmental groups who were shifting their focus from the West to private lands in the Northeast.

In view of this, Seven Islands hired Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) to conduct its certification audit. Because a full-blown evaluation of 975,000 acres can be very expensive, SCS conducted a preliminary, three-day overview of the lands. This preliminary evaluation serves as an early warning, minimizing the financial outlay of an operation that is likely to fail the complete evaluation (Seymour, Hrubes and Hammel 1995). However, successful completion of the preliminary evaluation does not guarantee that the complete evaluation will be successful. Seven Islands successfully competed the

certification process in the Fall of 1993 and thus can use SCS's "well managed" label in its marketing and advertising.

Seven Islands believes there have been several positive outcomes, which have resulted from the findings, and recommendations in the SCS report (McNulty and Cashwell 1995). First, silvicultural treatments are more focused and better controlled, and their new harvest levels will be sustainable for the next 200 years. Most surprisingly to Seven Islands, there has been a significant boost in company morale. For example, foresters feel rewarded for their past management efforts. Seven Islands believes certification has been a public relations success. In addition, one of the most important benefits to Seven Islands is that the landowner can defer questions about the certification to SCS. Therefore, questions of credibility can be directed to their findings and the SCS program rather than to Seven Islands. "Overall, the value of the certification, simply in improvements to the operation, has far outweighed its cost (McNulty and Cashwell 1995)."

Home Depot

With $12 billion in sales, 75,000 employees, 340 stores and more than 5,000 suppliers, Home Depot accounts for about 10% of the home building and improvement industry in the United States (Lober and Eisen 1995). Home Depot sees itself as an important representative of this industry with the ability to influence not only the home improvement industry but also its suppliers and the customers who shop at its stores (Lober and Eisen 1995).

In keeping with it's philosophy of helping to improve the quality of life, Home Depot established the most extensive environmental program in its industry. It is a program that attempts to go beyond compliance with laws toward real improvement of the environment (Home Depot 1992). One component of the program is a comprehensive environmental policy with seven principles. Two of those principles are relevant to this discussion: 1) a commitment to improving the environment by selling products that are manufactured,

packaged and labeled in an environmentally responsible manner; and 2) encouraging customers to become environmentally conscious shoppers.

An important aspect of Home Depot's environmental program is that it applies to the products manufactured by others but sold in Home Depot's stores. Because of its limited expertise in analyzing environmental elements of products, Home Depot has hired SCS to examine the environmental claims made about the products it sells. In fact since 1991, Home Depot has required that all vendors making an environmental claim for a product or package have that product evaluated by SCS (Lober and Eisen 1995). Today more that 25 products have been voluntarily certified. These products may then display SCS's "Green Cross" label, or the label may be used together with a more comprehensive Environmental Report Card which reflects the complete environmental profile of the product (Fox 1995). Home Depot had carried the only certified wood product which is sold at the retail level, Collins Pine wood shelving. This wood was independently certified by SCS to be harvested from a well-managed forest. (Other certified products are available by mail order, such as teak, outdoor furniture through Smith & Hawken and certified by the Rainforest Alliance.) Home Depot also had the goal of eliminating the sale of all rainforest wood, unless it is certified. The Collins Pine program was discontinued in 1997 due to logistics problems and lack of available volume.

According to Lober and Eisen (1995), the certification process has several benefits for Home Depot. Certified green products may fill a new market niche if consumer demands continue to increase. By marketing certified products, Home Depot tells consumers that it cares about the environment. "Most importantly, the company recognizes that the real ability of a retailer to improve the environment is by leveraging its suppliers." Home Depot's approach shows how the dynamics and structure of the free-enterprise marketplace, including concern for customers and the position of an individual corporation, can reduce reliance on the government for solving environmental problems through regulation (Lober and Eisen 1995).

Negative Responses to Certification

The more typical response by the wood products industry to environmental certification is more cautionary in nature. While individual firms have said little regarding certification, their industry trade associations have been very negative towards this issue. It is in the individual firms best interest not to respond negatively to this issue but rather to let their trade associations take the lead. Many individual firms seem to be waiting to see what will happen with this issue and perhaps hoping it will simply go away. In essence, they do not want to be seen promoting certification or fighting it, and they are waiting to see if there is sufficient consumer demand before getting involved.

International Wood Products Association (IWPA)

Robert Waffle (1994) at the IWPA suggests there are several questionable assumptions regarding certification. The first faulty assumption, according to Waffle, is that forests all over the world are being badly managed, that the timber industry is responsible for massive deforestation or degradation, and that certification can change that. Waffle gives evidence to suggest that this is not the case: the U.S. has increased the volume of standing timber in the last 40 years by 82%; in the tropics, the problem is one of poverty and population pressure; harvesting in the tropics is almost exclusively selective; and only a small amount of tropical forestry production goes into international trade.

Another assumption which Waffle (1994) questions is that consumers are the driving force behind certification. He suggests demand is limited to a small segment who want to appear 'environmentally correct' and to a few buyers who want a marketing gimmick. A number of studies have found that their may be a willingness to pay for certified wood products, but Waffle (1994) believes the only study which is valid is the marketplace and because of lack of certified products, it has yet to be tested.

American Forest & Paper Association (AFPA)

In November of 1993, a Certification Task Group was chartered by the AFPA to develop background information and a status report on forestry certification (Anonymous

1994c). This task group found many advantages and disadvantages to third-party forest product and forestry certification. Some of the positive aspects according to this report include: certification implies harvest rather than preservation; an opportunity for the industry to gain a competitive advantage compared to products with higher environmental burdens; and an opportunity for individual companies to gain a competitive advantage. Some of the disadvantages of third-party certification include: the potential loss of control over forest management and product decisions; certification systems are currently immature and highly uncertain; proposed certification standards go beyond the traditional best management practices approach to include other factors; and the process of developing standards will likely be time consuming and divisive.

Overall , because the task group believes that individual company certification is beyond the scope and control of a trade association, it has limited its recommendations to generic industry certification. Some of these will be discussed in the next section as alternatives to third-party certification, proposed by the wood products industry.

Industry Alternatives to Wood Products Environmental Certification

As explained by the AFPA Task Force on Certification, certification is not new to forestry. The oldest and most widely recognized, at least by the forestry industry, forestry certification program in the U.S. is the American Tree Farm System (Berg and Olszewski 1995). The forest products industry created this program as a recognition program to voluntarily encourage landowners to manage and protect their forests. This first-party certification program requires landowners to comply with state and federal environmental regulations and includes standards for the management and harvest of timber.

The AFPA, as the main industry association, suggests that the wood products industry pursue a voluntary, first-party certification approach like the Tree Farm System instead of third-party certification. In particular, the association promotes the AFPA's Forest Management Principles. Implementation of these Principles would be through self-certification with an annual report from the company CEO to the Association. The

advantages of this sort of approach are that the membership has maximum control over the content and interpretation of the principles, self-inspection allows the opportunity for continual improvement consistent with industry objectives and the companies involved are responsible for only their own operations. "Self-certification also has the potential to defer and offset the drive toward third party certification by government or private sector certification contractors (Anonymous 1994c)." The major disadvantage of this approach is that self-generation of standards and annual inspection may not be viewed as a credible approach by retailers, consumers and foreign governments. According to Berg and Olszewski (1995), adherence to these principles will be a condition of membership in AFPA by January 1996.

Berg and Olszewski (1995) question whether "third-party prescriptive forestry certification" will result in environmental improvement. They believe that once a 'green label' is awarded, the incentive to continually improve and upgrade operations is lost. Moreover, they suggest consumers already pay for sustainable forestry through many publicly funded regulatory programs which prescribe the practice of private forestry in the U.S. However, Berg and Olszewski (1995) do support first-party, "systems certification" programs such as AFPA's and the International Standards Organization's environmental management systems. They suggest these programs: set standards for continuous improvement; educate forest landowners; indicate a company's long-term commitment to sustainable forest management; and will result in greater environmental performance at less cost than prescriptive performance-based approaches.

Some in the industry believe that ironically the environmental costs of imposing certification on wood products could outweigh the benefits if, as a result, the consumption of non-renewable, energy-demanding substitutes increases (Anonymous 1993). In essence, wood will be placed in an unfair competitive position to materials which do not have such environmental sanctions imposed (i.e. concrete, steel, plastic, etc.) and in fact have more of an environmental impact. Koch (1992) figured that if nonrenewable structural materials such as steel, aluminum, concrete, brick and plastics replace structural wood,

there will be a significant increase in global energy consumption, ranging from 25 to 141 million barrels of oil annually and CO^2 additions to the atmosphere, ranging from 11 to 62 million tons annually. Some suggest that this trend toward the use of nonwood substitutes is occurring, with builders using more steel studs and masonry products.

Because of this possible trend, the Western Wood Products Association (WWPA) has contracted SCS to perform a Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) on western wood compared to other substitute products to show wood's environmental advantages. Specifically, SCS is conducting life cycle evaluations to measure the relative environmental benefits and burdens of wood and four alternatives steel, vinyl, concrete and aluminum. The research will measure each product's impact on renewable and non-renewable natural resources, the amount of energy consumer in manufacturing, in-place energy impacts over the life of the various materials, air and water emissions and the environmental impacts of each product's solid waste volume and chemical breakdown upon disposal (WWPA 1993). WWPA hopes this study will provide the construction and building design industry with independently certified environmental impact information to help guide the materials selection process.

Non-Industrial Private Forestland Owner Issues

Non-Industrial Private Forestland (NIPF) owners are defined as private forest owners who do not own or operate wood processing facilities, and include farmers, miscellaneous individuals and non-forest industry corporations, such as banks, insurance companies and the like (Bliss et al. 1997). While NIPF owners own from one to thousands of acres of forest, more than one-half own fewer than 10 acres (Birch 1996).

America's private forests are breaking into smaller ownerships at rates well above those attributable to the needs of more people for more space. Since the early 1900s every forest survey finds more owners. The most recent comparison shows ownerships increasing 1.6 times faster on average than general population growth: about 146,000 more ownerships created from a basically static forestland base every year—400 more

pieces every week. Most of these pieces come from the midsize ownerships of 100 to 500 acres each (DeCoster 1998).

This fragmentation and disaggregation of NIPF holdings can create significant challenges to forestry management and development of cohesive regional forest policy. This challenge is not limited to just the United States. Brunette (1994) found that there are inherent disadvantages to private forestry in Quebec, Canada as well, such as the great dispersion of the individual woodlots and the small area of each woodlot (264 acres for active pulpwood producers; 148 acres per owner). Brunette feels that the development of these forests must also overcome other disadvantages including the great number of owners (120,000) and the fact that many of these owners sometimes lack information and incentive. According to Powel et al. (1993), 59 percent of our nations timberland is owned by private individuals or groups. In some regions of the country NIPF owners own the majority of the forest. For example, more than 75 percent of southern New England is owned by individuals (Brooks et al. 1993) while regions of the Northeast and the South have similar ownership patterns (Rickenbach et al. 1998).

With regard to production patterns in the southern United States, the focus of this study, a large share of the region's softwood timber production (35%) comes from the relatively small share of forested acreage (23%) owned by forest industries. A much larger share of the region's forest lands (67%) is held by NIPF owners, but they produce a smaller share of the region's softwood timber products (58%) from their lands (Newman and Wear 1993). The differences in relative output reflect differences in management approach between the two ownerships. Industrial forestlands, held by firms which also own wood processing facilities, are managed almost exclusively for timber production. On NIPF land, however, the production of nontimber benefits may be of equal or greater importance than the production of timber (Hartman 1976; Binkley 1981; Boyd 1984 cited in Newman and Wear 1993). Although production is lower on nonindustrial private forests (NIPFs), they are the principle source of raw materials for the forest products industry (Henry and Bliss 1994).

Studies indicate that NIPF owners indeed own forestland for a variety of reasons. In one study conducted by Rickenbacher et al. (1998) in Franklin County in western Massachusetts, the number one reason to own forestland NIPF was privacy. Sale of forest products ranked eighth. In a study of NIPF owners conducted in Alabama, about 25 percent of the sample cited income from timber sales as the primary benefit of ownership (Bliss no date given) while Luzadis-Alden and Krasny (1990) found the top three important reasons for owning Adirondack forest land for residents are having a primary home in a wooded area, timber production and investment. The social and economic characteristics of private forestland owners and their objectives must be considered when developing management programs. For example, as owners age, for example, some may harvest because they need money for retirement (Birch 1994). By contrast, it is believed that “baby boomers", who are well known for their environmental concerns and high educational levels, might not harvest because they do not need current income (Marcin and Skog 1984).

The importance of NIPFs could have significant ramifications for certification. As forest products companies increasingly disinvest from the Pacific Northwest and reinvest in the South, and as the public's demand for noncommodity values from these forests increases, their future environmental condition and productivity is drawn into question. Three forestry activities have an immense influence on the future of these forests: timber harvesting, forest regeneration and implementation of best management practices (BMPs) (Henry and Bliss 1994).

Although the literature does not contain empirical studies regarding NIPF attitudes and beliefs about certification per se, this group has been studied in the context of ecosystem management. Bliss et al. (1997) found that among timber selling NIPF owners support for environmental protection is strong in a study of seven mid-south states. In their study, environmental protection was high among the objectives of most NIPF owners in the region and that only maximizing timber profitability does not suffice for most NIPF owners. A further connection to the notion of ecosystem and certification is the work of Jones et al.

(1995) in which NIPF owners have been found to differ from the public in that they tend to be more likely to engage in environmentalist behaviors such as contributing to interest groups or buying "green" products. Ecosystem management may be especially attractive to NIPF owners if it is seen as a more "environmentally friendly" way to manage forests. Ecosystem management also may be attractive to NIPF owners because it seeks to integrate multiple-resource values (Brunson et al. 1996).

The Future of Certification

Many companies in the wood products industry have questioned the future of environmental wood products certification. Some have suggested that this is an issue that will continue to impact the industry (Anonymous 1995; Mater 1995). "The discussion of forest management and forest products certification programs is increasing and will continue (Anonymous 1995)." This issue will continue to be driven by environmental non-governmental organizations, consumers demanding green products and perhaps by some in the industry itself. "Perhaps a move toward certification will come from forest managers themselves, in the clarity with which they define sustainable forests and the sincerity they display about managing for sustainability (Mater 1995)." At least, we will continue to see a number of companies who use environmental certification as an important marketing tool. However, for a majority of the industry to adopt third party certification, a much larger demand by wood products users and consumers will have to be shown. The great majority of the industry will most likely adopt some sort of first-party, voluntary program such as AFPA's Forest Management Principles or ISO's standards.

Discussions by international and national governments and environmental NGO's regarding the definition of sustainable forest management and certification will also continue. It is critical that the U.S. wood products industry increase its participation in this dialogue. This will hopefully ensure that indicators and measures for sustainable forestry are compatible with local forest conditions, socioeconomic systems and existing laws of the U.S. "While there is value in agreed on underlying principles, standards and indicators,

any certification or quality assurance system must be flexible enough to adapt to different and changing ecological, economic and sociopolitical situations (Anonymous 1995)."

According to a SAF study report, certification is a mechanism through which some aspects of sustainability can be monitored. In turn, a market demand for sustainable products may create a market incentive for individual companies to certify products in order to increase competitiveness. Thus, certification programs may provide consumers with the ability to generate an incentive for the forest industry to practice sustainable forest management, although the willingness of consumers to do so is debatable. Also, these programs can provide a mechanism for industry to communicate positive accomplishments to the public. Despite many current problems, these programs are one of the viable methods to aid in providing sustainable forestry in the U.S. and internationally. Although certification is not likely to replace existing forestry regulation, it could very well influence U.S. forest management policies and practices (Anonymous 1995).

Conclusions

In this review of the literature, the attempt is to convey the state of environmental certification in the U.S. While it is unclear what form environmental certification will ultimately take in the U.S., it seems clear that this is an issue which will continue to impact the forestry and wood products industries. Most likely, the majority of these industries will adopt some form of first-party environmental certification, but the success of these programs in reducing consumer environmental concerns remains to be seen. However, as third-party certification continues to evolve and address issues which have been raised, some industry members will adopt this approach to differentiate their companies and products in the marketplace.

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & DESIGN

Data Collection and Analysis

Sampling

Sampling survey procedures and follow-up efforts followed the widely used and accepted Total Design Method (TDM) developed by Donald Dillman (1978). Data analysis was conducted using established and verified statistical analytical methods.

The sample frame for this study is 6,661 Non-Industrial Private Timberland Owners in Louisiana. This sample was extracted from a list of over 40,000 timberland owners in the state of Louisiana. The list was provided by the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center. In addition, directories of forest landowners and state association membership lists were used. Mailing lists, key informants and selected demographic and industry data were compiled using these sources.

Pre-test

Pre-testing of draft survey instruments and telephone administered questionnaires were conducted using 25 randomly selected individuals from the sample population. In addition, input was solicited from the State of Louisiana Department of Agriculture Forestry, the Louisiana Forestry Association and faculty at Louisiana State University. Pre-testing included follow-up interviews. Based on pre-testing, the survey instrument was refined before final distribution.

Survey Instrument and Procedures

Mailed surveys were administered to gather information from the sample frame of non-industrial forestland owners. Question structure was varied including 5-point Likert scaled questions anchored on scales of importance or agreement. In addition, Ordinal, fixed and interval data were posed in dichotomous or multichotymous formats and open-ended questions. Measures well documented in the marketing literature were modified to fit the

study sample frames. In accordance with TDM procedures, the survey process included pre-notification, one mailing and a reminder.

It was clearly communicated to respondents that questionnaires will be completely anonymous and confidential, an approach that has been attributable to increased response rates. Study respondents were promised, and received, a copy of summary study results for participating in the study.

Data Analysis

Data entry was be closely supervised by the principal investigator to ensure data entry accuracy. A mainframe computer software package, SPSS as well as personal computer based analytical and statistical tools were used in data analysis. A variety of qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to analyze and report data. Quantitative data reporting includes tables, graphs, charts and other figures convey study results. Descriptive, univariate and multivariate statistical methods are also used extensively.

VIII. SUMMARY

Non-industrial private forestland (NIPF) owners comprise a significant part of forest ownership in the United States. Studies have shown that NIPF goals and objectives for their forestland is diverse. In the context of forest ceritifcation, initiatives are being developed by certifiers to accommodate the unique ownership characteristics of NIPFs.

To date, there has been scant research that looks at NIPF reactions to certification. This research fills that gap by identifying NIPF attitudes and beliefs toward certification, looking at their potential for participation and discusses their suggested alternatives to third-party certification. This information may help in the development of viable alternative strategies to third-party certification as well as help landowners develop certification planning and marketing tools for those that wish to participate in the third-party certification process.

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X. Appendices

APPENDIX I. LOUISIANA FORESTLAND CERTIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Section I. Forestland Ownership

1. Do you own forestland in Louisiana? (Please circle the correct response).

    1. NO----------→ IF NO, PLEASE STOP HERE AND RETURN THE SURVEY IN THE POSTAGE PAID ENVELOPE.

    2. YES----------→ How Many Acres? _____
    → Please identify the Parish(es) where your forestland is located:

    _____

    _____
    _____

2. How much forestland have you acquired in the last 10 years in Louisiana?
    _____Acres

3. How much forestland have you disposed of (sold or deeded to others) in the last 10 years in Louisiana?
    _____ Acres

4. In which of the following ownership categories does the major portion of your forestland holding fall? **(Please circle only one.)**

    1. INDIVIDUAL (INCLUDING JOINT HUSBAND, WIFE AND FAMILY OWNERSHIPS OTHER THAN FAMILY CORPORATIONS)
    2. PARTNERSHIP
    3. CORPORATE
    4. CLUB OR ASSOCIATION
    5. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)_____

5. If your ownership has a business or association with it, what is the nature of the organization: **(Please circle only one).**

    1. FOREST INDUSTRY (SAWMILL, PULPMILL, ETC..)
    2. FARM INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS (MANUFACTURING, MINERAL EXTRACTION, ETC.)
    3. REAL ESTATE NON-INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS (RETAIL, SALES, SERVICE INDUSTRY, ETC.)
    4. SPORT/RECREATION CLUB OR ASSOCIATION
    5. PUBLIC UTILITY
    6. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)_____

6. Have trees been harvested from your land, either by you personally or by someone else, during the time you have owned your forestland?

1. NO
2. YES-------→ If YES, Year of the most recent harvest _____

7. Do you plan to cut or harvest trees from your land for your personal use or for sale?

	Wood for own use (Check one)	Wood for sale (Check one)
In the next 10 years?	_____	_____
Possibly at some future date?	_____	_____
Never plan to harvest?	_____	_____

8. During the cutting, what products were harvested? **(Circle all that apply.)**

1. FUELWOOD FOR YOUR OWN USE OR FOR THE USE OF FRIENDS
2. OTHER PRODUCTS FOR PERSONAL USE (FENCE POSTS, LUMBER, ETC.)
3. FUELWOOD FOR SALE
4. SAWLOGS FOR SALE
5. PULPWOOD FOR SALE
6. POSTS, POLES, AND PILINGS FOR SALE
7. CHRISTMAS TREES FOR SALE
8. OTHER PRODUCTS (PLEASE SPECIFY)
9. DON'T KNOW WHAT PRODUCTS WERE HARVESTED

9. Is there a written forestry or wildlife management plan for your property?

1. YES 2. NO

If yes, who prepared the plan? (Please circle the correct response)

1. I PREPARED THE PLAN.

2. OTHER, PLEASE SPECIFY

10. Have you ever sought advice or assistance in managing your forestland?

1. YES 2. NO

11. Why do you own forestland? (Please rank with number 1 being the most important.)

Rank

___ Land investment (hope to sell all or most of my forestland at a profit)
___ Recreation (hunting, camping, fishing, bird watching, etc.)
___ Timber production (growing timber or other forest products for sale)
___ Farm or domestic use (having the woods as a source of timber for my own use, e.g., firewood, fence posts, etc.)
___ Enjoyment of owning "green space"
___ Part of the farm (forestland is the untillable part of the farm and serves no useful function in the farm operation)
___ Forestland is part of my residence
___ For an estate to pass on to my children
___ Other (please specify)

Section II. Environmental Issues

1. For the statements below, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the single most appropriate number after each statement.

	strongly disagree		**neither disagree nor agree**		**strongly agree**
Whenever possible, I buy products which I consider environmentally safe.	1	2	3	4	5
I would pay more for environmentally friendly products.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe that environmental information on packaging is important.	1	2	3	4	5
I generally believe environmental information on packaging.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe there is much corporations can do to improve the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe there is much individuals can do to improve the environment.	1	2	3	4	5

Section III. Certification Issues

Environmental certification means that the forests from which the wood comes are managed in a sustainable manner and that the trees are harvested in an environmentally sound manner. Please refer to the enclosed information.

1. For the statements below, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the single most appropriate number after each statement.

I believe there is a need for some form of environmental certification of timber management and harvesting of:

	strongly disagree		**neither disagree nor agree**		**strongly agree**
US public forests (National Forests/BLM)	1	2	3	4	5
State Forests	1	2	3	4	5
US private forests	1	2	3	4	5
Tropical forests	1	2	3	4	5

I believe that forest environmental certification can help sustain the health of :

	strongly disagree		**neither disagree nor agree**		**strongly agree**
US public forests (National Forests/BLM)	1	2	3	4	5
State Forests	1	2	3	4	5
US private forests	1	2	3	4	5
Tropical forests	1	2	3	4	5

The push for forestry environmental certification in the United States is primarily due to:

	strongly disagree		neither disagree nor agree		strongly agree
Consumer demand	1	2	3	4	5
Certification consultants	1	2	3	4	5
Forestry organizations	1	2	3	4	5
Federal Government	1	2	3	4	5
State Governments	1	2	3	4	5
The certifiers themselves	1	2	3	4	5
Environmental organizations	1	2	3	4	5

2. For the statements below, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the single most appropriate number after each statement.

	strongly disagree		disagree nor agree		strongly agree
I understand the concept of environmental certification.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe environmental certification can reduce tropical deforestation.	1	2	3	4	5
I trust environmental claims made by wood product suppliers.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe consumers will pay a premium for environmentally certified wood products.	1	2	3	4	5
I have adopted guidelines on forest sustainability on my land.	1	2	3	4	5

3. From the list below, please indicate your level of trust regarding each listed entity to implement forestry and forest products certification.

	I trust this entity The LEAST				**I trust this entity the MOST**
A non-government environmental organization (i.e. Sierra Club)	1	2	3	4	5
The Federal Government (i.e. USFS/BLM)	1	2	3	4	5
State Government (i.e. Forestry Department)	1	2	3	4	5
A wood products industry association (i.e. American Forest & Paper Association)	1	2	3	4	5
A private for profit certification company (i.e. Scientific Certification Systems)	1	2	3	4	5
A non-profit certification group (i.e. Smartwood/Rainforest Alliance)	1	2	3	4	5
A professional forester who has been approved by a certification organization	1	2	3	4	5
International Standards Organization (i.e. ISO 14000)	1	2	3	4	5
Individual wood products company would certify their own company.	1	2	3	4	5

4. For each statement below, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the single most appropriate number.

	strongly disagree		**neither disagree nor agree**		**strongly agree**
I believe U.S. forestry laws make certification unnecessary.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe forestry laws in my state make certification unnecessary.	1	2	3	4	5
At this point in time, sustainability is an unworkable concept.	1	2	3	4	5

Environmental certification adds an additional, unnecessary level of regulation.	1	2	3	4	5

5. For the statements below, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the single most appropriate number after each statement.

	strongly disagree		**neither disagree nor agree**		**strongly agree**
The professional forestry community has been adequately involved in the certification discussion.	1	2	3	4	5
Certification programs can provide a vehicle for the forest industry to communicate positive accomplishments to the public.	1	2	3	4	5
The number of certification organizations that exist causes consumers to be confused.	1	2	3	4	5
Certification is a potentially viable mechanism to aid in promoting sustainable forestry in the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
Certification could reduce the need for additional forest management regulation.	1	2	3	4	5
The U.S. forestry community should be involved in the certification issue	1	2	3	4	5
I question the willingness of the public to support certification.	1	2	3	4	5

7. Are you willing to allow certifiers to freely check your forestry operations?

1. YES 2. NO 3. MAYBE

8. Are you personally willing to pay for the costs of certification?

1. YES 2. NO 3. MAYBE

9. Please describe what you believe to be viable alternatives to third-party environmental certification of forest management and harvesting.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Section IV. Please Tell Us More About Yourself

Remember, your responses are completely anonymous.

1. What is your age? (Circle one response)

    1. Under 25
    2. 25-34
    3. 35-44
    4. 45-54
    5. 55-64
    6. 65 and over

2. What is your primary occupation? _____

3. Are you a resident or non-resident forestland owner in Louisiana?

    1. RESIDENT 2. NON-RESIDENT

4. How long have you owned forestland in Louisiana? _____ YEARS

5. What is your best estimate of the total combined income of all members of the owner's household over 14 years of age during the past 12 months? (Please include NET income from businesses, farming, and rentals, money from jobs, pensions, dividends, interest, social security, unemployment, welfare. and workman's compensation.) (Circle one response)

    1. LESS THAN $10,000
    2. $10,000 TO $19,999
    3. $20,000 TO $29,999
    4. $30,000 TO $39,999
    5. $40,000 TO $49,999

6. $50,000 TO $59,999
7. $60,000 TO $74,999
8. $75,000 TO $99,999
9. OVER $100,000

6. Your gender: _____ Female _____ Male

7. Your marital status:
   ____ never married
   ____ divorced or separated
   ____ widowed
   ____ married or living with partner

8. What is your level of education? (Please check highest level reached.)
   _____ Some high school or less
   _____ High school graduate
   _____ Some college
   _____ College graduate (B.A./B.S.)
   _____ Graduate degree (M.S./Ph.D.)

9. Are you a member of any organization who's primary mission is to protect the environment?
   ___ Yes *(please specify)* _____
   ___ No.

Please return this survey by placing it in the *postage paid* envelope and dropping it in the nearest mailbox. Your response has insured that this study will be a success. Thank you for your cooperation and time in completing this survey.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Rich Vlosky, Associate Professor, Forest Products Marketing, Louisiana Forest Products Laboratory, 108 Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries Building, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803; Phone: (504) 388-4527 Fax: (504) 388-4251

Appendix II

Alternatives to Certification Responses

Please describe what you believe to be viable alternatives to third-party environmental certification of forest management and harvesting.

1. In this country there is no doubt in my mind that we have reached the stage of regulation insanity. Are you a liberal? Have you ever asked any of these impractical environmentalist if they know anything about the pride and responsibilities of ownership?

2. I haven't heard of forest certification until now. I didn't know it was a problem. I can see where there could be some benefits, but there is a down side also – COST.

3. I am satisfied with the way things are now done. My acreage is so small that this doesn't concern me to a great extent.

4. Leave it like it is.

5. Absolutely irrelevant & unnecessary.

6. Local regulation developed out of the competing pressures of economic, social and environmental interests and pressure groups.

7. In Louisiana the public companies (even oil) appear to do a good job.

8. Onsite owner monitoring & management of a viable natural resource with selective harvesting in a timely & proper manner under supervision of a professional forester. As a private landowner, a shared interest by industry in preservation & sustainability of our forests has not been apparent in my considered opinion. Over the years, rogue harvesters (independent or otherwise) failure to observe property lines, questionable log scaling/ measurement, unnecessary destruction of young growth, failure to repair surface damage and a lack of trust & honesty are but a few of my observations. A top to bottom sponsored effort to improve in these and similar areas may outweigh advantages of a certification program.

9. Oversight by the State Dept. of Agriculture & Forestry.

10. Please refer to "the McDermoth Study" done in Washington State. Additional info is available from House members Helen Chenoweth, Doc Hasting and George Nethercut. They predict unintentional consequences. Land managers are against and want study terminated. They see no need to impose additional restrictions, i.e. certification.

11. I think that if more private forestland owners would secure the services of an independent Certified Professional Forester to establish a plan for forest management. They would not be taken advantage of by timber buyers or timber companies. Proper forest management already meets most of the certification goals.

12. Professional forest manager – with college & work experience. They & government officials are enough.

13. The individual state forestry departments with their graduate foresters located in the parishes or counties of that state have the training and knowledge of topography and soil types to handle this task.

14. Environmental certification indicates that forest owners are greedy and can not be trusted to do a good forest management job. I believe that third party property management is the "taking of property without compensation". A way around the United States Constitution.

15. I feel that market forces will advance forest management. Those who properly manage timberlands will reap financial benefits as well as secondary benefits. The American Tree Farm System is sufficient for private landowners. The AFPA is sufficient for commercial interests.

16. The party would need to be non-government & not controlled by special interest. Where do you get a party like that?

17. There are no viable alternatives. We are all human. We want to put ourselves in the best light possible. Corporations & the government have both been known to lie to the public in order to make themselves look good. Environmental certification by a third party not in a profitable business makes the most sense.

18. Need specifics before addressing. Wide range of approaches.

19. I do not see a need. There is plenty of help available for those who will use it. Others won't use help anyway.

20. I have been farming and working with the rules and regulations of the USDA for almost 40 years. Although USDA may not have the perfect plan, they have a unified plan that represents all crops grown in the U.S. It is my belief our government should have the same say in the forestry. Not some private group.

21. It is not needed. Adam Smith's "Invisible Hand " of capitalism will cause the value of timberland to increase and thus increasing the money that can be spent maintaining and improving forestland.

22. Let everyone take care of their own land.

23. Should not be.

24. I support protecting the environment but know very little about certification.

25. More willing participation of the state foresters to work with small landowners who did not grow up on a farm or are familiar with bugs and diseases and dollar value of current stand. Individuals such as myself could manage the land better with a little help.

26. AF & PA Sustainable Forestry Guidelines.

27. I am unfamiliar with the certification process or goals.

28. Enforce laws and rules that are already in effect and 2. Make it hard on unethical timber buyers and consultants to do business (every profession has shady players and it would help if these could be targeted and gotten rid of).

29. State Forestry Services – similar to licensure or certification regulations for professional practitioners, with perhaps gradations of certification. I trust the state more than Feds or industry!

30. More education and advertising.

31. Educating all forest landowners in correct forest management for their area & type of forest.

32. Loggers are the biggest problem. They steal, tear down & destroy. Since most of the forestland in Louisiana is privately owned, there is little reason for them to certify because some logger is going to beat them out of it.

33. Education of landowners. A certification not of the timberland owners but the companies that own the lumber mills and the individual foresters. They only want to get as much money from your land as they can regardless of the consequences to the land and wildlife.

34. An independent organization consisting of environmentalist, professional foresters, cognizant scientists, etc. coordinated by U.S. Forestry Dept. to determine the rules and implemented through trained foresters supported by gov. dollars.

35. A cooperative state forestry and U.S. Forest Service certification plan might work well.

36. Forest managers for large acreage, reportable to state.

37. Keep out of private lands.

38. Management by forest product companies, independent foresters.

39. Responsible ownership.

40. Let the landowners manage their land as they please. Have state foresters to help if landowner wants them.

41. Trust local companies that you know and their representatives.

42. Develop reasonable "Best Management Practices" and then educate timber buyers, timberland owners & timber harvesters of the needs to follow those practices. Professional foresters, LA. Dept. of Agric. & Forestry & LA. Agricultural Cooperative Extension can do more to protect the environment than those promoting certifications.

43. I think we already have the necessary practices in place in the U.S. by using BMPs, streamside management & other such practices. As far as the rainforest & other third world countries, I am not sure how to prevent the destruction, but I do not think "certification" will have any impact. These poor countries need money – period.

44. Need no alternatives. Certification not necessary.

45. I can't endorse something until I know more about how "third party" certification will really function.

46. Don't know. I believe companies and state forests are managed ok right now.

47. I don't know enough about this entire subject to respond intelligently.

48. What's wrong with the system now?

49. Not knowledgeable to recommend.

50. Publish & educate foresters, forest management people, forest landowners.

51. The government rarely does anything correctly or efficiently due to incompetence and political considerations. Why should it be any different here? Surely, the markets will dictate most behavior!

52. We have too much regulations in America today. Most are not cleared through the Congress as I feel they should be. A case in point. The recent decrees one person made about organ donations and their use.

53. Do not know anything about all of this!

54. The marketplace and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

55. Change estate tax law. This would promote investment for timber management. At present, money poured into timberland is lost at death of owner - ($625 estate tax exemption) requires sale of property in probate to pay taxes.

56. Good sound forest management programs that do not allow the cut & rape of the land that has occurred in the past . Land must be managed or it will be lost.

57. Education of loggers and owners and all involved with forests that sustainable or eco forestry is in their enlightened self-interest.

58. I believe forestry certification will become as absurd and overrun as the Wetlands Act. When you have laws written in stone (no flexibility) then you have raised inflation for our grandchildren with no good purpose when it only costs more money. That's when good "timber" or "good land management" goes down the tube.

59. No alternative is needed. Enforcement of existing regulations are enough.

60. If operations are audited yearly, I believe that land management professionals working with the landowners would be sufficient. Otherwise, I fear the cost to the individual as well as the loss of control over property by the individual landowner.

61. Encourage state & federal cost share programs.

62. There must be some non-financial party involved in wood product use in the short term to preserve the long term benefit of forestry.

63. I believe private landowners should be left alone to use their land as they choose. Any outside influence by government or environmental organizations should be met with resistance.

64. I don't want to be forced to do anything.

65. Life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

66. I do not have an alternative. I depend on Willamette to provide me with needed management problems.

67. Recommended Forestry "Best management Practices (BMP) for Louisiana sponsored by the Louisiana Dept. of Agriculture & Forestry. Individual owners interest in sustainable profits from his forest acreage.

68. If necessary let my consulting professional forester do it.

69. There are sufficient numbers of environmental wackos to preclude the need for environmental certification. If there is a need and a justification the private sector will address it in an economical and viable manner.

70. Let the market rule. Leave people alone.

71. Market forces – Supply & Demand – Cap. gains tax rates on timber sales – Cost sharing on replants – Favorable as val tax rates on timberland – Lower inheritance tax rates on timberlands.

72. No comment. Or the end result of further certification or regulation is higher cost to the end-user consumer. I think the consumer is tired of seeing prices in an upward trend due to over regulated environmental issues.
73. Let the people manage their own property to the best of their ability to make a return on their investment. Good forestry management makes money. But somebody's idea from an office that the only land they pay taxes on is a yard leaves me indifferent.

74. Not able to answer. For my lands, I believe in selective cutting, good environmental practices, & management by certified forester.

75. I am a "States Righter". I know little to nothing about forestry. I believe that states would be in the best position to handle forestry regulations, etc.

76. Leave decision making up to individual landowners on how to use their land/ forests.

77. Private property should be managed by its owners or employees/ consultants to its owners. The government, especially at the federal level, is far too involved in regulation of private property.

78. Manageable guidelines that are cost effective, less gov't./ outside interference, tax incentives to make mgt./ reforestation feasible, restructure present estate taxes to encourage management in lieu of cutting to pay taxes.

79. Private landownership. If you own the land it is in your own interest to take care of the land. Deforestation occurs most in countries where the government or government officials own the land!!!

80. Certified management foresters.

81. LA. Forestry Association already working with forest owners and workers with plan. I think called BMP gives more of a desire to cooperate along this line than some extra layer of bureaucracy.

82. To help and inform out-of-state/ absent landowners.

83. Keep government out.

84. Using a professional forester to advise.

85. I believe most publicly traded timber companies are under enough political and free market pressure from stockholders, consumers, government and others to cause them to adopt environmentally correct policies.

86. Promote a desire for good timber growing plans among private forest landowners. Note: Most companies already desire this.

87. I believe federal & state foresters could do this.

88. Checking one's own land occasionally to see that no destruction has occurred – or paying a person to supervise sites on occasion. Large landowners would have to check periodically as their experience proves the need. Marking land (painting trees) seems very useful.

89. Public & private landowner awareness. Education to change mind-set of the average American so we could better appreciate our natural resources. MADE to be aware of how man has a way of destroying everything in sight.

90. I do not know enough about this subject to make an intelligent answer. I just want the gov't. to stay out of it with their rules & regulations & penalties.

91. Working with a professional forester for a plan for making timber sales, reforestation, etc. with sustainability being one of the objectives.

92. Don't know. I have not been in the forest environment that long to describe ideas of the third party. And forest management, also harvesting.

93. Use your own judgement.

94. Any certification system will only be as effective as those who implement it. Their integrity & honesty will be essential. This state is not famous but infamous for the lack of these character qualities. If the officers are honest & truthful then the people of LA. find some way to pull in a favor to get what they want. Regulations & laws are not administered equitably across the board. Therefore, I'm against any more regulation.

95. I'm not fully convinced we need a third-party into the forestry business. That means more federal control of which I'm against. I have been practicing sustainable forestry for many years, example: when I cut I replace with seedlings. I have food plots for deer & turkey and I have maintenance fishing ponds.

96. Public/ landowner education, incentive programs.

97. I believe that the landowners along with mature certified foresters and state forest dept. is all that is needed.

98. Viable alternative. Individuals living near the area could serve as an overseer, using a guide given to them from the Dept. of Forestry in order to know what to look for. The non-profit organization of forestry if there be one, could update the needs if there be any and let owners know the results.

99. Let landowner decide what they want to do with their property. Most people will try to protect their investment without any help from outsiders.

100. I believe the private landowner should not have additional requirements forced on it by the government or any other agencies or private individuals. Because we are in a global work environment and the American public isn't willing to pay the additional cost for these requirements not in the long term.

101. I have a problem with third parties telling private landowners (individuals & corps) what to do with their timber. I do not have this problem with publicly owned land.

102. We have owned our property for 120 years. All of our dealings with state & federal government have been negative. We believe we can manage our affairs without interference from state, federal or outside agencies. Until we learn to have more trust in political or self interest groups we must sail close to share.

103. Leave it alone.

104. Keep 3rd party groups out.

105. Showing landowners how much more valuable their land will be if they manage it correctly.

106. The only alternative that makes sense is to let the landowners manage our own land. We are the ones who will take care of it, who know or learn how best to maintain our land in a safe, productive manner and who will keep replanting trees so that we will always have healthy, constantly growing forests. We use common sense. The third parties' ideas are leading to massive forest fires and diseased trees. That is no way to take care of our trees.

107. By continuing present practice of forestry management with guidance and recommendations by state and parish forestry services.

108. Inclusion probably needs to be voluntary with no cost and some kind of benefit to landowner ("a perk").

109. Environmental certification is merely another ploy by the liberal sector in our government to remove our right to manage our own property as we see fit. I despise the reasoning of these people and suggest they return to school to learn what's wrong with their reasoning process. This group of "do-gooders" foul up everything they touch!

110. Adhere/ comply (voluntarily) with Louisiana Forestry Best Management Practices, 2. I totally oppose government regulation of and interference with private forest landowners (non-industrial and industrial), 3. I totally oppose environmental certification of forest management and harvesting.

111. I believe that environmental certification can lead to better utilization of forest resources and that it can be marketed and be profitable ("dolphin free tuna", eg.). Therefore, I believe it should be voluntary, coordinated by a profit-oriented organization. USFS has historically mismanaged its land, therefore, I think they should not have any management role, but should be invited to submit to certification and urged to follow environmentally wise policies.

112. A non-profit organization to better inform timber owners of better ways to produce better timber to ensure there will always be timberland for the future use by using (local tax dollars).

113. Increased awareness of "Best Management Practices" pertaining to logging and site preparation of land to make a certification for BMPs not have an "Environmental Certification". Have the State Office of Forestry conduct the certification. Possibly have forestry consultants become certified by the state to certify "BMPs" are implemented.

114. Education concerning desirable environmental practices.

115. Market force.

116. Not necessary.

117. My forester takes care of my timberland.

118. Education of individual property owners & corporations.

119. Education – Please do not add another level of bureaucracy.

120. We would prefer to depend on <u>local</u> forestry people.

121. I've worked with 150 certifiers in the paper industry. They have some very good concepts. However, there must also be some compromise and common sense applied. As a small landowner who employs (uses) the services of a forestry professional, I would favor his certification over us having to get our small forest certified.

122. Individual responsibility for the environment; as I do, consult with forester and knowledgeable individuals & weigh all options.

123. Education.

124. It would probably have to be some monetary incentive such as cost share help and education to help private landowners (LA. largest timberland owner) move toward sustainable forests. The Forestry Productivity Program, just started this year, will help. Mississippi has had it for many years and I've used it there. As far as the state & federal forests, it'll be a tug of war between the so-called "environmentalists" and the "professionals" who really know how to manage timberlands.

125. Don't know enough about certification to comment.

126. Personal management, 2. State & parish organizations.

127. Individual responsibility.

128. I do not agree with any more government regulation. Already have too much and environmentalists are too involved and should not be so strong in having to do with private ownership of forestry.

129. An individual should manage his own property.

130. I do not need a third party telling me how & when to harvest my timber. I have a forester now that helps me with that. But I do most of my own. If there were a 3rd party they would want to be paid. Enough people get their part of my timber money now.

131. Education of landowners regarding the economic benefits of (1) good forestry practices and (2) the advantages of consulting a professional forester regarding management.

132. Environmental certification may take away my freedom to exercise free enterprise. Just another government control device.

133. We manage our land for sustained harvests of timber. We use "best management practices". We do this because it makes good sense economically. We can "certify" to this.

134. I have no viable alternatives. I love my land and my trees. I will listen to suggestions that make sense in order to manage my land properly. I do not join organizations and resent being told what I "have" to do. I run my show.

135. The more government gets involved the worse things get. The Louisiana Forestry Association can get the proper info out & get the job done.

136. The landowners themselves should be informed of current management and harvesting and accept responsible attitude to maintain credibility for their own land and forests. Many agencies already offer advice and services such as La. Forestry Commission, USDA, Farm Ser. Agencies, La. Ext. Service and others. These agencies can certainly supply sustainable forest production.

137. As a forest landowner, there are many reasons you may have for your interests in the land. For me they are in this order, timber production, hunting and recreation, and aesthetics. The management plan I have encompasses and works in harmony with my desires. I have not consciously included environmental management nor do I feel that I should be regulated on my land. I have included SM2s and buffer zones to highways and am sure my land would pass any inspection given. Not to mention that in Louisiana your land will be naturally regenerated in only a few years to correct any error that may have occurred during harvesting.

138. I have hired a professional forester to manage my lands and I believe that is sufficient, without hiring additional environmental experts.

139. Leaving out federal gov't. would be fine.

140. A fair standard of measurement that is easy to understand, to implement, and to correct. Must be inexpensive and paid for by the many, not the few.

141. Let landowners take care of their own property!! We have state laws (or rules) that takes care of private or public land. So, let it be.

142. Sound management practices enhance value of timberland ownership. The market will take care of the need for incentives for sustainability of private timberlands. On public lands timber is growing faster than harvest. Sustainability is not an issue. Promoting certification will only hurt the small forest owner.
143. Let the forest industry create its own criteria for harvesting standards and self checking audits.

144. Sound forest management by owners.

145. Have the owners of the land use their own discretion whether to use people w/ "certification of forest management & harvesting" or not. Do not make it a law. Let

the landowners be free to do what they want with their land. There should not be too much government control.

146. If the environmentalists knew anything about forest management, they would own forestland themselves; but they are a bunch of leaches sucking for tax dollars while they do absolutely nothing. Make them get a job and pay their own way!!

147. Private ownership of land – landowners have a vested interest in good management practices and sustainability.

148. I am not sure what "environmental certification of forest management and harvesting" means. I am generally opposed to government interference with the use of private property.

149. No way unless people give up their greed. Adding to this problem is the distrust of government, etc. I personally don't like to see trees cut – it devalues the land. The right to sell it is another matter.

150. State & federal programs offer information pertaining to forestry issues. The Louisiana Forestry Association and Society of American Foresters and volunteer adherence to Best Management Practices works well in Louisiana. Public awareness and education is offered through the organizations.

151. You don't need alternatives or third party environmental certification.

152. My family & I have owned the land for 56 years. I love this land like Scarlett loved Tara. I try to be a good owner & do my best for it in all ways possible. I have a forester working for me to help in this matter. I don't need the government or other outside interests telling what I can or can't do. Hopefully "private property" still means something to Americans – it certainly does to our family.

153. Cannot trust the state; sometimes trust the Feds, forestry least, EPA the most; trust private environmental (forestry) groups.

154. Certification is a costly & bogus idea that will drive costs of forest products upward without contributing to sustaining forests. I do not trust anything that "feel good" groups or government have to say about it.
155. I am opposed to government interventions on private timberland.

156. Education & common sense, elimination of the "greed factor" – both private & public (impossible).

157. Free market.

158. I do not see one “alternative” for better forest management and harvesting. A combined approach with expanded use of forest consultants, corporate personnel, governmental foresters, Tree Farm programs, etc., is needed. The public needs to be informed as to the merits of multiple use.

159. I believe voluntary BMPs to be the best way to obtain sustainability in forest and land management.

160. Don’t understand what this question means.

161. I believe a person has the right to manage and harvest his timber as he wishes. He has paid the price for his land and should be able to manage it as he sees fit. I believe that the certification progress is just another way for others to get part of your income.

162. Consulting foresters.

163. I have been involved in forestry since 1966. There has been a lot of changes in the way we manage forests since then. Most for the better, but still a few clearcuts aren’t replanted.

164. Have a forester and/or some other professional scrutinize the subject forest then make suggestions on what can be done to improve it to reach the ultimate goal of maximizing growth of pine trees in all stands of various ages.

165. Good land – timber management can enhance the environment and promote wildlife. Both timber production & wildlife management are sources of profits to our operations.

166. I don’t think there is any need for any environmental certification. This is just something else to give someone a job and waste money of tax payers.

167. Continue to let state forestry work with timberland owners.

168. Do so with strict regulations that protect private property rights.

169. Environmental issues haven’t always been the best for the consumers and have at times been ridiculous and far to an extreme to be best for the consumers for places to live or for their livelihood. Some of their ideas appear to me to be from people who haven’t really “been there”.

170. Not familiar enough with this subject to make comment.

171. I believe a neutral third party environmental process is absolutely necessary. More information by local farm related agencies would be a step in right direction, such as FSA offices.

172. If you know the business individually as I do (72 years experience), you need very little other expertise.

173. State administered certification, federally administered certification.

174. Stress the importance & let the landowner make his/her own decision.

175. No additional involvement is necessary as present established sources are adequate and help is available to those who require assistance.

176. Make available to all landowners information explaining the nature and benefits of sound forestry management practice. Let individuals make their own decisions and act as they see fit. Regulation and "certification" only add bureaucracy and economic overhead to the forest products industry; and, they invariably become co-opted to serve the economic interests of the administrators, "certifiers", and those who sustain and benefit (economically) from their power and actions.

177. Some form of control of state & federal forests, leave privately owned forests alone.

178. Educational programs for timber owners at a very low cost to the individuals.

179. Less gov't. control.

180. Long term best economic interests of owners should be emphasized through education.

181. I have worked for several forest products companies over the years & have concluded that corporate America in general would wipe out the population of the world if it would increase their bottom line so there is no alternative to a neutral party in my opinion.

182. Regulation of forests.

183. Education of the landowners themselves. I think more information on sustainable yields, etc. should be given to landowners. They are the ones who own the timber, they are the ones who sell it. Regulations & laws of companies add to the cost of the finished product; some burden should be beared by small private landowners also.

184. Keep "rabid environmentalists out" – ex. Sierra Club – Earth First.

185. Dedicated, honest, hardworking forest landowners are themselves concerned with the environment and forest management. Some timber companies should be more environmentally conscious when harvesting timber.

186. Needs to be some regulation of timber brokers. Need enforceable standards for harvesting.

187. We can continue to manage our timberland without certification or additional governmental regulations.

188. I believe forestry owners have different purposes for owning forestland and do not see why certification would be important to people who do not wish to sell or commercialize their forestland.

189. Reducing the capital gains tax on timber & a person could better afford to manage all aspects of his farm.

190. Educate public about the true success of forestry in the U.S. Expose untruths of environmental extremists.

191. In America, educate owners about forest management. Offer seminars and written information and the services of forest managers if requested by the owner. In less developed nations and in particular the tropical, some sort of government help is probably needed.

192. I really do not have anything great to suggest. I believe intrying to save the environment and woodlands. I only cut trees as recommended. I participate in the gov't.'s program of harvesting only certain trees of certain sizes.

193. Stewardship programs.

194. Management.

195. Any responsible landowner will not destroy his forestlands unless there exists a viable alternative use for the property that comports with his/its financial objectives and obligations. Although we do not hunt, we have not harvested harvestable timber because of its aesthetic value and value as habitat for wild game and birds.

196. The approach that I am using is that of education, attending and taking the advice of those that have attended forestry seminars pertaining to environmental certification. I personally have been briefed on erosion control, the release of the seedlings by herbicidal application applied by professionals, and selective harvesting.

197. I maintain some control can be confusing to the small individual owners who have sales only every 20 years when a full growth is completed for sale.

198. The system now in use is better than more government regulations imposed on the private owner.

199. My feeling is we cannot afford, do not need and should not have certification of our timberland as this would be another mistake such as the EPA, which was set up w/ no controls but another agency of the federal government who answers to no authority - - but make their rules as they go. We have too many of these agencies – out of control – everyone riding and no one driving. If you want to see a prime example of this drive through a national forest – trees by road – 100 yards out has all been cut – check it out.

200. Stronger state guidelines that are enforced.

201. Published advantages of self directed forest management.

202. I believe in proof in the pudding – let public land prove their case first before asking private lands to be regulated.

203. Being a private landowner, I believe that between my professional forester & myself, the right & legal decisions concerning my land can be made. The government has the laws & the people to oversee the environment.

204. Since we have so many government agencies regulating every phase of the timber industry, both growing & harvesting, I see no need for more regulation. From what I read in this, it will only create another agency. All agencies cost the tax payer.

205. There is too much control out, or at consideration for control, of the property of small individuals.

206. Keep government intervention to a minimum. The spotter owl question in the Northwest was ridiculous. People need forest products. Certified foresters are the best way to go in my opinion. They give hands on, professional information that is personal.

207. A sustainable forest has to be the goal of the private and industrial forest community. Developing management and harvesting practices that include BMP which utilize technology on site prep, fertilization, herbicides, pesticides, soil fertility testing and analyzation to provide maximum growth potential and socio-ecologic use.

208. Private management of private property-no others need apply

209. When land owners including companies and states, realize the importance of managed forests, they will certify and improve it themselves

210. Have state and federal lands managed in a manner that shows good examples for all of us

211. I do not believe environmental certification is necessary

212. Certification is desirable for US and stated owned lands. Forest Management for small owners bay be done by private consultants and with the advice of extension service personnel. I would resist further intrusion of government in the use of certification

213. Elimination of government interference in our lives

214. Just leave me alone. I no not need any Johnny do-gooders telling me how to run my private affairs.

215. This crop forestry should be handled as all other crops in the certification of forest management.

216. There should be no third party. Management should be between landowner and buyer.

217. Having your own forester

218. A sustainable forest has to be the goal of the private and industrial forest community. Developing management and harvesting practices that include BMP which utilize technology on site prep, fertilization, herbicides, pesticides, soil fertility testing and analyzation to provide maximum growth potential and socio-ecologic use

219. Positive attitudes are best obtained by general education – persuasion – not by laying on new, and more regulation and requirements. People tend to rebel against perceived unwarranted intrusion and overbearing officials. Lead by example with publicity – tree farmers, for example.

220. I am not a professional forest mgr. Until now I am unfamiliar with this idea. However, conceptually I think it is good. Report cards, checks and measures, incentives for long-term thinking is valuable. Thus more financial incentives, tax breaks etc are viable alternatives. People behave somewhere between their heart and pocketbook.

221. I believe in market controls adding a certification requirement would just add one more gov't and/or industry regulation of individuals. I am fed up with having someone else mind my business.

222. Keep the gov't out of the business of telling private landowners how to manage their land. Gov't only fouls up anything it becomes involved in.

223. The economic impact of a healthy forest is all that is needed. Forest should be managed on an acre for acre basis. What is good for one forest landowner may not be good for his neighbor.

224. Each forest manager must make his own decision

225. Forest owner association

226. Unfortunately most environmental groups have never had to face investors. Never had to make a payroll and never had to deal with real world business decisions in their lives. I do not trust them of the politicians they elect. You will probably not get a true felling from many on this survey because it is not politically correct to be against the environment. I am not against the environment – just the nuts in the Sierra Club and gov't agencies that meddle in private ownership of property.

227. I believe the third party should be regulated by timber owners, some small landowners should have a say in this kind of endeavor.

228. Education and responsible stewardship of resources

229. I do not believe in third parties at all – If one has a good product. He may be able to sell at a profit. This sounds like another con job to get money from me or my forest sales. Therefore; if you are not prepared to make an offer on my product, stay away.

230. My answer would have to be the end result of harvesting and there really needs to be a change for the owner to get the right price etc. I am 82 and I am hoping for good changes in forest harvesting and management.

231. I have a limited knowledge of this subject and I trust the forester that works with me.

232. No Clear Cutting – harvest in strips where possible

233. I believe in Private Ownership and manage as I see fit.

234. Total control of property by owners. Gov't properties should be run on a controlled a basis. My 14,000 acres have been destroyed by salt water from the ocean which has killed many of the trees most of my property is swamp.

235. Prudent economics by landowner

236. Continuing education of forest landowners as to their responsibilities as custodians of land. Do not take away the individual rights of owners.

237. I think the forestry industry has done a pretty good job of keeping a handle on doing the right thing – Anything is better than letting the gov't or environmentalist groups

dictate to people, how they should tend their lands and investments – Private lands and Private land ownership is a right and we do not need people that do not understand timber mgt or no not own land to tell us how we can manage our lands or timber

238. I do not see a cost/benefit ratio to the whole idea for the small landowner – only somebody else telling me when and how to manage what is mine as the end result of this feel good idea

239. State of being certification is not viable. A third party could help or make things worse.

240. I really do not understand this. You should be doing more to encourage people to hold on to their forestland. There is so much development going on in Southeastern LA that something needs to be done to help people understand the need to plant more trees, not just cut their forest down and make sub-divisions out of their land. We won't have any forest left with all this development.

241. Being my gender and age I am not up to date on forestry, but I believe in work on environment. Trees are needed. It hurts me to see the hunters come in with bulldozers and go through on the land they lease to hunt on an destroy young trees. Yet nothing can be done

242. I do not really know enough about certification to give an opinion. However I would not want gov't, Sierra Club, etc telling me not to control burn, what trees to leave standing, what trees to cut. We already have too many regulations and too much beauracracy. If it happens voluntarily then I could be for it.

243. Individual owners monitoring their own lands

244. Common sense

245. Adhering to federal and state BMP's and wetlands regulations. Development of sustained yield mgt. plans for each tract of timberland based on owner's objectives.

246. Do not interfere with the private landowner but assist with fire control, pine beetle control and cooperate in reforestation projects

247. I am not sure that I fully understand the environmental certification issue. On paper this seems to be a great idea but I do not really understand the source of the program. If it is in anyway associated with forest products companies, I would be highly skeptical of its environmental claim and therefore would rather see gov't intervention (although this is also suspect), especially when dealing with public lands.

248. Stay away from private property

249. I do believe more needs to be done by state Forestry Assoc. and large consumers to work with private landowners on good mgt. Practices

250. There is already to much public influence in private property decisions

251. Provide a list of requirements for private individuals to voluntarily follow

252. I do not believe there should be any third-party alternatives, neither do I believe ther is a need for environmentalist in forest mgt. Or harvesting. The forest areas are the most normal areas of the world – nature takes care of nature – gov't involvement will destroy even the woods.

253. No alternative – certification is only a first step toward federal regulations

254. I strongly object to gov't or quasi-gov't rules, laws or regulations involving private land. Our country has existed for years without so much regulation and can continue to do so.

255. I believe in letting the owner of forestlands reach out to those who can help in growing good timber on their land

256. Provide tax break incentives each year for timber owners that have an existing forest and wildlife mgt. Plan. Unscheduled periodic inspections by the state forest and wildlife agencies would id land owners that qualified for the tax break. Periodic education seminars would also be essential to increasing the timber owners awareness of current trends in managing the land and all of its associated resources.

257. Better education of the owners might help

258. I have used Farmcraft Ass. For 12 years as did my uncle before me. They are knowledgeable and honest with their opinions. I do not need an extra layer. He marks timber, oversees cutting, solicits bids. I can not think of a better way of doing it.

259. Education of landowners by state and federal agencies – They do a good job already if one is willing to listen. Timber is timber and if someone does not want sustainability well, maybe he has other plans – otherwise he is out of the timber business anyway.

260. There are no alternatives. I can best take care of my own land. Any involvement by gov't or a third party organization in my affairs is unwarranted

261. Causing people to understand that we are not just owners but stewards of what God has entrusted us with. We should be able to profit but we also have responsibilities. I would not like to see the gov't tells me what I have to do, but would not mind their advice.

262. I am satisfied with the way things are now. We are doing a good lob with what we are doing now.

263. I do not think I need any of you. I plan to manage the land for the sake of the wildlife and not the dollar. Please stick to mgt. Of public lands

264. I believe the landowner should be able to use his land any way he likes. If I need help I will get someone. The gov't should stay out of landowners business.

265. I do not understand how this can work. When we log an area of forest the product may go to 5 or 6 different plants producing homogeneous products like paper and OSB or plywood which could be composed of wood from many different forest tracts, some certified and some not

266. I am against gov't regulation of private industries to a degree

267. My land is managed for sustained harvests. I use BMP's. I do this because it is the right thing to do from an economical standpoint.

268. Let landowners and foresters work it out

269. Leave us alone

270. Limited forestry mgt. Is a good concept for public lands and some private lands. However, mandatory regulation from a gov't and or industry group level are not generally acceptable. Forest mgt. Decisions should be strictly between the landowner and his private forester if he so chooses.

271. I believe we have too much government regulation. We do not need any more regulations in our lifes.

272. Pine trees in this country (Louisiana) will grow by themselves and self reproduce. Ways to help people grow better crops or trees should be shown by parish (county) agents. Big companies are here to produce crops for years. Individuals are such a minority that what they do will not make or break the housing industry. The regulations of this industry should be handled on a local level at a low cost to support environmental, economical and personal endurance. Too much control is communism and this is what all the regulation is leading up to.

273. We have, in this family, managed this forest for about 90 yrs, paid taxes and insurance on it, why would I want someone else in some department of forestry tell me how to manage what I own. Count me out of your environmental certification of forest management and harvesting.

274. Raising the quality of private timber managers, to include environmental impact and presenting planting and harvesting alternatives in a risk / return professional internal rate of return format. Timber is an investment competing with stocks, bonds and other products.

275. I know nothing about forestry and depend on US foresters for advice.

276. Our timberland is managed by professional foresters and the timber is selectively harvested in a cycle of 8-10years. This is all that is necessary.

277. I support the use of professional foresters to conserve and maximize forest sustainability.

278. A “free” market will regulate the best management practices. If there is a true demand for “environmental” sensitive practices, the market will make this known to landowners. Landowners will respond with the appropriate practices to satisfy the perceived demand.

279. For all land owners to practice good management and keep informed about any rules and regulations. Belong to Forestry organizations and subscribe to programs which have up-to-date information. Be good stewards of the land you have.

280. I believe that each landowner should engage the services of a competent forester to manage forestlands of any size. I also believe that all decisions should be made by the owner and his forester without interference by anyone.

281. Each land owner should be allowed to determine for themselves how they choose to use their land. There is too much government regulations and involvement in all that we do now. People can think for themselves.

282. Local and state forestry organizations can and will provide environmental management of our local timberland.

283. Profit motive – keep egg head activities out of the forest.

284. Too many cooks in the kitchen now!

285. There should not be a forest certification at all. This is a serious restriction on the nights of industrials and private companies as well as a throttle on wise use and a restriction on the Constitution of the United States of America! Just continue to educate the public and industry and encourage them to do what is best. Possibly offer incentives to those that encourage good stewardship. But for pete’s sake quit shaving this crap down people’s throats.

286. Let private ownership alone.

287. Leave things as they are now.

288. This is an entirely new concept to me, so all I know is what you've described. If consumers would be willing to pay a premium for certified products, then I would be willing to consider - otherwise not. Unfortunately, surveys and marketing research will not tell you reliably if consumers will do this. Only actual purchases will confirm. Also, if certification could be an alternative to existing government regulation, I would also consider.

289. Better education and assistance to private forestland owners will do more for sustainability of the forest than certification could ever do. Certification and certified forest products will only benefit the minority of consumers willing to spend that extra money and environmental organizations who want to feel like they are doing their part.

290. Stay out of it.

291. There is enough professional forest management now available.

292. I have had a difficult time trying to get my land "managed". Previously timber sales were through a lawyer dealing with the timber harvesters. It would be good to have licensed managers.

293. Give more financial incentives for the private non industrial land owner (FIP, Capital
294. Gains Tax Relief, more forest education, SIP) to continue to improve their forest land. I personally do not want any more government intrusion into my personal business. The people in government can't run the government programs correctly so what makes you think they can run forest management and harvesting.

295. Following "Best Management Practice" guidelines for Louisiana and advice from trained professional foresters.

296. I believe that the best system for managing environmentally safe sustainable forests is to have my timberland under the direction of professional foresters of my choice or timber company landowner assistance program, adhere to practices recommended in Louisiana BMP. Have a written timber management plan with emphasis on sustainable forest - profit - environment.

297. Forest owners themselves take more responsibility for environment sound practices.

298. More education.

299. Education

300. Too much red tape in all programs. Proper information to land owners with some financial help and working with local consulting foresters. Present laws are sufficient. Encourage good stewardship of the land and admonish the scavenger that rape the land. Economics will take care of most good practices.

301. Do not understand

302. Self regulation by loggers co's i.e. road-restriction, litter, etc.

303. Nothing - for smaller timber owners

304. BMP

305. I do not know what would be a viable alternative to this but I do not care for the 3rd party management unless it is voluntary and do not agree with strong regulations on private land.

306. Self regulating purchaser, i.e. mills.

307. Personal awareness, seeking information on conditions of forestland. Open mind on new concepts.

308. Do not have one. Allow timber consultants and timber companies to advise forestland owners based on their training and expertise. We would like to put 200 acres of farmland in the federal government reforestation program.

309. If you certify forest farmers then all farmers - cotton, wheat, pecano, etc - should be certified. The population needs education and financial incentives not more regulations and government interference.

310. Better federal and state laws on forest management.

311. Professional foresters managing all timber lands, adhering to only basic ecological and environmental and social considerations.

312. Leave off the word "environmental" in any forest resource certification. It's simply a buzzword that makes the uneducated or misguided feel warm and fuzzy. Use science not emotion and/or politics to create environmental politics.

313. All forms of government regulations should be eliminated from the private sector. Corporations and industry should fall under any forestry regulations, but forcing the small owners to manage their resources with the present regulations and government control is unheard of. Local forestry services should help not herder foresters in their efforts to build and survive on the income from products grown on their own property. The government and its agencies have too much control on the private sector.

314. SFI in the state timber associations.

315. Individual responsibility based on good land management practices, motivated by the best use for the property and maximizing income and property value.

316. Education of landowners on how to maximize income from forests. Elimination of government control at the state and federal level, because these controls (including this certification pitch) are responsible to the polities of the populace at large who are not knowledgeable or personally involved.

317. Reliable forestry companies (Int'l paper)

318. A forest practices act or mandatory BMP's, both of which I oppose.

319. Take precautionary measures in saving as much under-growth as possible.

320. Our forest is mostly swamp so I think it's OK as is. I'm really not in the position to answer all the questions properly, but I can say that I love trees and hate to see them destroyed. I might add that I'm 77 years old and widowed and the mother of 7 adult children of which 4 are senior citizens. I want to see forests saved but realize that some forest must be destroyed to make room for homes. One thing that bugs me is the contractors don't save any trees for shade and to beauty the homes!